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Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7455th meeting
Wednesday, 3 June 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ibrahim/Mrs. Adnin	(Malaysia)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mrs. Alingue
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Li Yongsheng
	France	Mr. Stehelin
	Jordan	Mr. Omaish
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zagaynov
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Mulvein
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994

Letter dated 15 May 2015 from the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/340)

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Letter dated 15 May 2015 from the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/341)

Letter dated 15 May 2015 from the President of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/342)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President: As this is the first public meeting of the Council for the month of June, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Her Excellency Ms. Raimonda Murmokaitė, Permanent Representative of Lithuania, for her service as President of the Council for the month of May. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Murmokaitė and her delegation for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994

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The President: In accordance with 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Rwanda and Serbia to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Judge Theodor Meron, President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals; Judge Vagn Joensen, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda; Mr. Serge Brammertz, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia; and Mr. Hassan Bubacar Jallow, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to documents S/2015/340 and S/2015/342, respectively containing letters dated 15 May 2015 from the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/341, which contains a letter dated 15 May 2015 from the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Judge Meron.

Judge Meron: I am grateful for this opportunity to appear before the Council to report on the work of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals. My remarks supplement the written reports that the ICTY and the Mechanism recently submitted (S/2015/342 and S/2015/341, respectively), and I hope they will serve to further elucidate both the successes and challenges these institutions have faced over the past half year.

However, before turning to these points, I would like to congratulate Malaysia on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I also wish to underscore my gratitude to the Security Council's Informal Working Group on International Tribunals, and especially to Chile for its role in leading the Group. Last, but certainly not least, I am grateful for the crucial

assistance provided to the ICTY and the Mechanism by the Office of Legal Affairs. The Legal Counsel, Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, is an outstanding leader in the cause of international justice; he is ably supported by the Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, Mr. Stephen Mathias.

I first turn to the ICTY. The Tribunal has faced a number of challenges that, to my great regret, have caused delays in cases. The specific lengths and causes of these delays are outlined in the completion strategy report submitted in May (S/2015/340, enclosure). Certain of these changes to previous forecasts are caused by factors outside our control, such as the health of accused individuals and the discovery of new evidence. In particular, the trial of Mr. Goran Hadžić has been temporarily adjourned for reasons relating to his health. In addition, the trial of Mr. Ratko Mladić has been reduced to four sitting-days a week, following medical advice, and the Prosecution case in that trial has been reopened following the discovery of new evidence. Finally, I note that Mr. Vojislav Šešelj's health continues to be of great concern to the Tribunal.

Adverse health developments concerning accused persons and the discovery of new evidence are, by their nature, factors that are very difficult to predict or, when they arise, to ignore. I can assure members of the Council, however, that the Judges sitting on the benches in the affected cases make every effort to limit delays linked to these factors, while ensuring that the Tribunal meets its obligation to provide detainees with appropriate medical care and allow relevant evidence to be presented in court.

Perhaps the most widespread cause of delays to particular cases is, however, staff attrition, particularly among mid-level and senior-level members of the legal drafting teams assigned to support the work of the Judges. As those Council members who have followed our reports over the past years are no doubt aware, the Tribunal has long warned of the problems that such attrition can cause. We have taken all steps we were permitted in order to address this problem, including obtaining waivers to particular staff rules and undertaking initiatives to improve staff morale.

These efforts have been effective up to a point, but they have not been enough. In the last reporting period, a number of mid-level and senior-level staff members with extensive case-specific experience have accepted positions at other institutions able to guarantee longer-term employment. The Tribunal acted swiftly to replace them as soon as possible, but inevitably new staff members are not able to immediately match the extensive case-specific knowledge of those who depart after spending years immersed in the evidentiary context and procedural history of individual cases.

In conjunction with the Council's Working Group and the Office of Human Resources Management, the Tribunal continues to examine all steps we are able to take in order to curtial attrition in these critically important final years of the Tribunal's life. On a personal level, from the moment I realized the potential for delays in cases, I have led efforts to identify problems and potential means of resolving them or minimizing their impact. In particular, I insisted that the Registrar provide key drafting teams with all possible resources; for example, in the *Prlić* appeal, which is forecast to be completed in the latter part of 2017, I doubled the membership of the drafting team.

I very much regret the fact that I am not in a position to provide only positive news today. As the President of the Tribunal, I accept full responsibility for these delays. I urge the Council, however, to consider the delays I have just discussed in their broader context. Of course, it is absolutely clear that the Tribunal must continue and redouble its efforts to adopt strategies that reduce any delays in ongoing cases to a minimum; this obligation implicates both the rights of defendants and the resources of the international community. I can assure members that the Judges and staff are working diligently to complete judicial work as rapidly as possible, while maintaining our commitment to procedurally just trials and appeals.

At the same time, however, considered through broader lenses, the Tribunal continues to make significant progress. During the reporting period, the ICTY rendered two major appeal judgements in the large, multi-accused *Popović et al.* case, and in the complex *Tolimir* case. By the end of this year, the forecasts provided by presiding Judges indicate that the ICTY will have completed its work on all but two trials and two appeals. While various cases have suffered delays, these can each be counted as a matter of months, and the last cases are still expected to be completed in 2017, as predicted in the ICTY's previous forecasts.

Even more significantly, the Tribunal's contributions to ending impunity for international crimes continue to serve as a momentous symbol of the international community's commitment to rendering justice for crimes committed in the Yugoslav wars, and to the

laudable aim of preventing grave crimes like those that hang so heavily over any historical account of the past century from being committed again.

I will soon be travelling to the former Yugoslavia to join commemorations of atrocities committed in Srebrenica and elsewhere. I recognize that the work of the ICTY can only ever offer a small measure of solace to the individuals and broader communities most affected by these heinous acts. But even as all acknowledge the limitations of international criminal tribunals, we must also appreciate the ground-breaking nature of courts like the ICTY. The fact that the ICTY has accounted for every single individual it has indicted is a testament to the power of the rule of law. Indeed, I am convinced that the international community's increasing condemnation of grave breaches, as expressed through the establishment and ongoing support of international criminal tribunals, has had a material impact on the conduct of war everywhere and — it is my sincere hope — reduced the suffering of those affected by conflict. When the history of the ICTY is written, it is this legacy, not limited delays in projected delivery dates, that will be remembered and, I believe, celebrated.

I will now turn to the Mechanism. I am very pleased to confirm that, as set out in its May progress report, the Mechanism continues to serve as an example of best practices, completing its judicial and administrative work to a high standard and in an efficient manner. In these efforts, the Mechanism has been fortunate to receive excellent cooperation from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the ICTY, as it increasingly assumes responsibility for functions once carried out by these Tribunals.

With respect to judicial work, I can report that in December I presided over the panel that rendered the *Ngirabatware* appeal judgement. This was the first judgement of the Mechanism and was delivered with no delays to the ambitious schedule previously reported to the Security Council. The Mechanism's judges have also issued a number of decisions and orders on motions addressing a variety of issues, including matters related to enforcement of sentences, variation of confidentiality measures, requests for review of judgements and cooperation with national jurisdictions. I have every expectation that the Mechanism's judges and small supporting legal team in Chambers will continue to efficiently process ongoing judicial work. In addition, the Chambers of the Mechanism have established rosters and procedures that will allow us to adjudicate upcoming trial and appeal work both efficiently and in a manner that respects the highest procedural safeguards.

In addition to addressing ongoing work, the judges of the Mechanism adopted a code of judicial conduct last month. This code sets out core principles that will guide Mechanism judges on such issues as independence, integrity, confidentiality and outside activities. Adoption of the code is a reflection of the Mechanism judges' commitment to the highest ethical standards.

The Mechanism has also been making great progress in assuming responsibility for other ICTR and ICTY functions. Most notably, the Mechanism has made steady progress in creating a small, self-standing administrative capacity in the light of the ICTR's imminent closure and the ICTY's continued efforts to transfer responsibilities. These efforts are complemented by the signing of a host State agreement with the Netherlands and the continued implementation of the parallel agreement concluded earlier with Tanzania. Both these countries and Rwanda have offered important assistance to Mechanism offices based in their respective territories.

In addition, the Mechanism has made significant progress in a number of other areas. Construction of our new Arusha building is continuing and on schedule, with our move there planned for next year. Our archives section is assuming responsibility for an increasing percentage of the ICTR's and ICTY's materials, and our monitoring of cases referred to national jurisdictions was recently strengthened when the Kenya branch of the International Commission of Jurists assumed responsibility for monitoring cases referred to Rwanda.

As I have stated before, two key challenges continue to face the Mechanism. The first involves the outstanding arrest warrants for the remaining ICTR indictees who have yet to be apprehended, including three who are expected to be tried by the Mechanism. The fact that the ICTY was able to account for all its indictees is a powerful symbol of the international community's determination to end impunity. It is imperative that all members of the international community continue and indeed increase their efforts to apprehend the remaining ICTR fugitives. The Council's leadership in this regard remains essential.

The second challenge facing the Mechanism is posed by persons acquitted by the ICTR or who have

completed the sentences imposed by the Tribunal. The Mechanism assumed responsibility for outstanding relocation issues on 1 January 2015. We have adopted a strategic plan that sets out ways to address the challenges posed by the issues of relocation in relation to this group of individuals. Our planning focuses on concrete steps that can promote resettlement and also reduce costs to the international community, in keeping with the Mechanism's commitment to efficiency and cost savings. However, we continue to rely on the good efforts of the international community to provide appropriate opportunities for relocation. As I have stated before, it is a fundamental responsibility and a humanitarian imperative to resettle the small number of individuals who have been acquitted by the ICTR or completed the sentences imposed on them. Once again, the continued leadership of the Council on this issue is very important.

I cannot conclude my report on the Mechanism without underscoring again the gratitude of its judges and staff for the enormous support we have received from the ICTR, the ICTY, the Office of Legal Affairs and other United Nations agencies, as well as from national Governments. As we rise to the challenge of serving as an example of best practices in international criminal justice, we recognize that our efforts are successful only because of this continuing support.

As always, my report today contains descriptions of both progress and challenges. It is perhaps inevitable that institutions with mandates as audacious as those of the international criminal tribunals will never be able to comprehensively meet all the high aspirations of our many stakeholders. But I can assure the Security Council that the judges and staff of the ICTY and the Mechanism strive every day to make progress on the inspiring mission we have been assigned. Together with our partners from all over the globe, the ICTY and the Mechanism are committed to continuing the fight to end impunity and, through our work, to supporting the strengthening of the rule of law at the international level and around the world.

The President: I thank Judge Meron for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Judge Joensen.

Judge Joensen: I would like to begin by extending my congratulations to the representative of Malaysia, His Excellency Ramlan Bin Ibrahim, whose country's delegation is presiding over the Security Council in June. I also seize this opportunity to welcome the representatives of Angola, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain and Venezuela, which have joined the Council since my last briefing in December 2014 (see S/PV.7332). I wish them all the best for a successful term of duty. On behalf of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), I would also like to express the gratitude of the entire Tribunal to all of the Governments of the Council for the support they have provided as we approach the completion of our mandate and closure of the Tribunal.

Please allow me to once again express my sincere appreciation to the United Nations Legal Counsel, Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares; the Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, Mr. Stephen Mathias; and the staff of the Office of the Legal Counsel for the continued support they provide as a liaison between the Tribunal and the Security Council.

It remains an immense honour for me to provide the members of the Security Council with an update on the progress towards the completion of our mandate, especially as it is expected that this may be my penultimate briefing before the Council.

First, I will provide an update on the progress of the judicial work. I am happy to report that the Appeals Chamber has now completed its work with respect to all appeals from Tribunal trial judgements, with the exception of one case, the *Nyiramasuhuko et al. (Butare)* case concerning six persons.

Following the oral hearings that took place in April, the *Butare* case is now in its final stage, judgement drafting. As previously reported, the scope and complexity of the appeals in the *Butare* case combined with the continued departures of experienced staff and the need to rule on voluminous pre-appeal litigation prior to the oral hearings has plagued the appeals team and caused considerable strain on their workload. Nonetheless, the delivery of the *Butare* appeal judgement remains projected for later this year, and more precisely, we expect the judgement to be delivered in the fourth quarter of 2015. The formal closure of the Tribunal is still expected to occur before the end of 2015, following the rendering of the judgement. I commend the judges and all of their support staff for the tremendous work that they continue to do to ensure that the extremely large and complex *Butare* appeal is completed as projected.

I would also like to note that in December 2014, in light of the projected time line for the completion of the *Butare* appeal and considering the current Judges' involvement in cases before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, I requested that the Secretary-General convey my request for the extension of the terms of office of the ICTR Judges to the Council. On behalf of the Tribunal and my fellow Judges, please allow me to express our gratitude for the support shown by Member States in resolution 2194 (2014), which granted the requested extensions.

Considering the significant work that the Appeals Chamber continues to undertake and bearing in mind their commitment to finalizing our sole remaining appeals case without delay, I feel that it is important for me and for the Council to acknowledge the dedication and commitment demonstrated by all the Judges and staff of the Tribunal in The Hague and in Arusha, who work under extremely tight deadlines to ensure that we meet our completion strategy goals. I would also like to commend President Meron for his leadership of the ICTR Appeals Chamber and to thank him for the assistance he provides with respect to the transition of functions to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals and to me in my role as Duty Judge of the Arusha branch of the Mechanism. It is also important to recognize the work of Prosecutor Jallow and Registrars Mr. Majola and Mr. Hocking as well as the work of their respective Offices, all of which have been instrumental in our progress towards completion and the transition to the Mechanism.

As I have done in the past, I would now like to briefly update the Council on the issue of reparations for victims. As previously reported to the Council, the International Organization for Migration has completed and submitted a draft assessment study to the Government of Rwanda on the issue of reparations and possible ways forward. Once the report is finalized, which should occur in the coming months, it shall be transmitted to relevant stakeholders and follow-up activities will be planned. I should like to take this opportunity to renew my praise for the efforts being undertaken to ensure that the project continues to move forward.

I now return to the very troubling issue of relocating those persons who were acquitted or convicted and released who are still residing in Arusha. The issue of relocation remains a daunting one, and the challenges that the ICTR have faced with relocating these persons, some of whom have been residing in a United Nations safe house for over a decade, have been brought to the Council's attention on numerous occasions. As the ICTR makes preparations to close its doors, it is only appropriate that it passes that important duty onto the Mechanism, which has assumed responsibility for the relocation and care of the acquitted and released persons in Arusha on 1 January. However, until its closure, the ICTR remains committed to providing any support and assistance that the Mechanism requests. In that regard, we once again call for the urgent assistance of the Security Council to find a sustainable solution to the issue.

I now turn to the subject of the transition to the Mechanism. I am proud to report that reliance by the Mechanism on the ICTR for administrative and other services has been significantly reduced, and the Mechanism continues to assume responsibilities, pursuant to resolution 1966 (2010) and in line with the transitional arrangements. The monitoring of all ICTR cases referred to national jurisdictions is now fully the responsibility of the Mechanism; however, the ICTR continues to assist the Mechanism by providing interim monitors in the French cases.

I would also like to draw the attention of the Council and the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals to several cases of contempt/false testimony before the Tribunal. In May, as part of an exhaustive review of judicial work being in transition to the Mechanism, it was determined that there were, in fact, four cases of contempt/false testimony before the Tribunal. Those indictments were confirmed prior to 1 July 2012 and, pursuant to the transitional arrangements in annex 2 of resolution 1966 (2010), remain the responsibility of the ICTR. Considering that all of the suspects remain at large and that even if the trials were to commence today, the ICTR would likely be unable to complete them prior to closure, I have assigned benches to review the indictments and ascertain whether any action is necessary prior to closure of the ICTR in order to preserve the possibility of those cases being prosecuted by the Mechanism.

With respect to the Tribunal's archives, the ICTR remains devoted to ensuring that records are prepared in a manner that will facilitate their effective management after being transferred to the Mechanism. I am pleased to report that as of 5 May, the Tribunal had transferred to the Mechanism more than 1,700 linear metres of records comprising more than 75 per cent

of physical records anticipated for transfer. Judicial records relating to the *Butare* case have been separated for transfer following the appeals judgement, while all other records have been transferred, or are scheduled for transfer, before the Tribunal closes. Despite the challenges presented by the volume and nature of the records and the downsizing of human resources, the Tribunal is hopeful that the preparation and transfer of its records will be completed on time.

As I anticipate briefing the Council as President of the ICTR only one more time after today, I would like to conclude my remarks with a word on the Tribunal's legacy. Apart from the judicial work that continues to consume most of our attention, the Tribunal has taken its impending closure as an opportunity to ensure that the lessons learned in the creation, operation and closure of an ad hoc international criminal tribunal are preserved for posterity and shared with those Courts, both international and domestic, that will succeed the ICTR.

The twentieth anniversary of the ICTR provided the Tribunal with one such opportunity as representatives from various Courts and academia travelled to Arusha, The Hague and New York in November and December 2014 to reflect on the Tribunal's impact on peace and reconciliation in Rwanda. Those events allowed for discussions on the initiatives that the ICTR has created to share developed practices with continuing judicial institutions, as well as other initiatives, such as the best practices manuals created by the Office of the Prosecutor, the aim of which is assisting other international and national courts to build on the experience of the ICTR.

Most recently, a workshop on the best practices and lessons learnt in Chambers was held at the International Criminal Court (ICC), where representatives from the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, the ICC, the ICTR, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Mechanism engaged in discussions on the technical aspects of providing legal assistance to the judiciary during the pre-trial, trial and appellate phases. The workshop also facilitated discussions about what else can be done to ensure that the lessons learned in managing trials at the ICTR are not lost with its closure.

I wish to commend all of those involved in organizing those workshops, which I hope will continue, as they provide an important forum to learn from the past by examining what works, what needs improvement and how judicial institutions can continue to evolve.

It is, as always, a distinct privilege to address the Council and on behalf of the Tribunal I wish to express our gratitude for the support that the Governments of Council members continue to provide. As we make arrangements for closure, their continued assistance remains crucial to the efforts that we are making to ensure that the Tribunal closes its doors with its mandate completed and its legacy secured.

The President: I thank Judge Joensen for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Brammertz.

Mr. Brammertz: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to address the Council on the progress of the Office of the Prosecutor towards the completion of our mandate. In this reporting period, we moved closer to finalizing our work in the Tribunal's last trials and appeals. As the Council has already heard, at the end of the reporting period, four trials are ongoing. In the *Mladić* case, the defence continued to present its evidence. But as previously indicated, my Office will, later this month, briefly reopen the Prosecution case to present our recently-discovered evidence on the Tomašica mass grave. We will use nine courtroom hours to present our evidence.

In the *Hadžić* case, the trial was adjourned in October 2014 due to the accused's ill health and has not yet resumed. In the *Šešelj* and *Karadžić* cases, we continue to await the trial judgements, which are estimated to be delivered later this year. During the reporting period, appeal judgements were delivered in the *Popovic et al.* and *Tolimir* cases, largely confirming the genocide and other convictions we secured at trial. Therefore only three appeal proceedings now remain. The oral hearings in *Stanišić and Simatović* and *Stanišić and Župljanin* are anticipated to be held later this year. In the *Prlić et al.* appeal we successfully completed, on schedule, our written arguments. It involved, among other tasks, reviewing, researching and responding to 168 defence grounds of appeal spanning nearly 1,000 pages.

Our team completed that immense task in less than four months by working around the clock. The Appeals Division is now fully focused on preparing for the presentation of oral arguments in the final three appeals. The countries of the former Yugoslavia continue to cooperate with my Office and respond, as required, to our requests for assistance. State cooperation in all aspects of our work remains mandatory and will continue to be closely monitored.

My Office recognizes the significant results achieved during the reporting period in regional cooperation on several high-profile cases. That regional cooperation includes joint arrest operations conducted by the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. Those developments are positive signs that national authorities are responding to the concerns we have previously expressed. We call upon national authorities to continue to tangibly demonstrate their commitment to cooperation and increased comprehensive accountability for war crimes.

Mrs. Adnin took the Chair.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that only a very limited number of the outstanding cases at the national level have been prosecuted to date. More should also be done on the most complex and highest-priority cases, particularly those involving senior- and mid-level officials. It has become clear that further progress in effective national justice requires a more strategic approach in the investigation and prosecution of war crimes.

In my previous reports I noted the need for improved management and leadership in the Office of the Prosecutor of Bosnia and Herzegovina. My Office continues to discuss outstanding challenges with the Prosecutor's Office, including the practice of breaking up comprehensive cases into separate trials. But my report also highlights the successful results by the Prosecutor's Office regarding crimes related to the Srebrenica genocide. We encourage the Prosecutor's Office to ensure that the strategic approach and effective practices of its Srebrenica team are applied in other investigations and prosecutions.

This brings me to the category II cases transferred by my Office in the period from 2008 to 2010. During my recent mission to Sarajevo, the Chief Prosecutor could report only limited progress in those cases. However, he gave strong assurances that prosecutorial decisions will be taken in all remaining cases by the end of the year. While similar commitments were made previously, we trust that they will be honoured this time.

We continue to believe that those and other challenges can be successfully addressed if there is national ownership of post-conflict justice, appropriately supported by international assistance. My Office will continue to engage directly with national authorities and encourage full responsibility for the accountability process, while assisting them to improve their methods and implement lessons learned from our experiences. In our meetings, victims from every group are unanimous in their desire that the search for missing persons continues to be a key priority. While there have been significant results already, there are still too many families that do not know the fate of their loved ones. More can and needs to be done in that regard.

Authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina should give serious consideration to the recommendations recently issued by the International Commission on Missing Persons. It is critical that the law on missing persons be fully implemented and that national authorities take full responsibility for that vital work. For our part, my Office is participating in an intensive effort with key partners to strengthen the search for missing persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina by re-examining available evidence and information. If that work proves successful, we will consider how to expand it to other States in the region.

In conclusion, the foremost objective of my Office is to expeditiously complete our work in accordance with the completion strategy. We will continue downsizing staff in line with the completion of trials and appeals, while also documenting and sharing our experiences.

Next month will mark the twentieth anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. It will be an opportunity to remember all victims of the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and to recognize that survivors are making extraordinary efforts to build a more peaceful future. It is also an opportunity for the international community to reaffirm its commitment to ensuring justice for past crimes and preventing their repetition.

The President: I thank Mr. Brammertz for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jallow.

Mr. Jallow: I feel greatly honoured to once more present a progress report on the work of the Office of the Prosecutor of both the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, this time covering the six months since December 2014.

The ICTR has now reached a milestone in the march to completion and closure. In 2015, the Office of the Prosecutor presented its oral arguments in the case of the *Prosecutor vs Nyiramasuhuko* and five others, otherwise known as the Butare case. This is

the last appeal and the last case of the ICTR. The oral hearing that took place in April is therefore significant in bringing to a close a very important chapter in the life of the Tribunal and the mandate of the Office of the Prosecutor. We expect that the Security Council's request that all cases pending at the ICTR be completed by end of 2015 will be fulfilled by delivery of the final judgement in the *Butare* case before the end of 2015. In that regard, I would like to thank all the staff of the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICTR, and indeed of the whole Tribunal, who have for several years devoted their time, talent and energies to the execution of the ICTR mandate and generally to the cause of international justice.

Accordingly, a sizeable number of appeal staff, including some members of the *Butare* appeal team, among them secretarial, language and administrative staff who worked tirelessly over the years in the appeals division of the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICTR, were separated from the Tribunal in May 2015 following the conclusion of the oral hearing in the Butare case. A small number of staff has been retained in the Appeals Division in order to complete outstanding pre- and post-appeal proceedings in the *Butare* case, as well as other ongoing closure- and legacy-related activities. The Council will recall that earlier on, with the conclusion of trials and the establishment of the Mechanism's Arusha branch, the Investigations and Trial Divisions of the Office of the Prosecutor had been abolished.

The Office of the Prosecutor continues to focus on and make progress in other areas such as archiving, disclosures and legacy projects. In the past six months since November 2014, some 1,100 boxes of material linked to active cases, particularly related to the three Mechanism fugitives, Félicien Kabuga, Protais Mpiranya and Augustin Bizimana, have been cleaned, processed, classified and transferred to the Office of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism. A significant amount of material in closed cases has already been handed over to the Mechanism Registry and that process will continue to the end of 2015. However, staff separation and attrition continue to hamper efforts towards timely completion of the remaining archival work of the Office of the Prosecutor, and current staff have been consistently urged to double their efforts. Notwithstanding those contraries, we shall continue to work towards concluding the remaining archiving work of the Office of the Prosecutor by the end of 2015.

The completion of legacy and best practices projects, including the writing of the genocide narrative based on facts judicially established by the Tribunal, remains on course for conclusion by the end of the year. In January 2015, the Office of the Prosecutor completed and published in the ICTR and Mechanism websites its report on the Tribunal's experience in the referral of cases to national jurisdictions, highlighting the challenges of empowering national jurisdictions to discharge their primary responsibility to investigate and prosecute international crimes, as well as ways to address some of those challenges. We believe that the ICTR experience carries useful lessons for the implementation of the principle of complementarity, the bedrock of international criminal justice.

Turning now to the Mechanism, I wish to report that the Office of The Prosecutor continues to take over functions from the Offices of the Prosecutors of the ICTR and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), as mandated by the Mechanism Statute. A few months ago, in April, during the period of remembrance of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, I visited Rwanda and met with various Rwandan Government officials to discuss various issues of mutual interest, particularly in respect to tracking fugitives and management of the cases referred by the ICTR to Rwanda for trial. The Mechanism Office of the Prosecutor continues to intensify its efforts in tracking the three top fugitives earmarked for trial by the Mechanism. We remain fully committed to their arrest and trial.

We continue to work closely with our partners in the Government of Rwanda, particularly the National Public Prosecution Authority, with INTERPOL and with and the United States War Crimes Rewards Program under the State Department's Office for Global Criminal Justice. The Investigations Section of the Office of the Prosecutor has been strengthened with new and additional staff, fresh initiatives have been taken and new working methods have been put in place to locate the fugitives and bring them to justice. I must stress however, that those internal measures need to be supported by the full cooperation of all States, particularly those where indictees are suspected to reside, if the tracking efforts are to be successful.

With regard to judicial activities, judgment in the *Ngirabatware* appeal case, the only Arusha branch appeal case, was delivered on 18 December 2014, with

his convictions for genocide affirmed by the Appeals Chamber. Following the delivery of that judgement, the staff members of the ad hoc appeals teams handling that case have now been separated from the Mechanism in accordance with the policy to keep the staff size of the Mechanism at a low level. Meanwhile, the core staff, with assistance from appeal staff of the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICTR, continues to deal with post-appeal review litigation arising from requests filed by persons convicted by the ICTR. The Office also continues to make preparations, including the creation of rosters, for the speedy recruitment of staff to manage the trials of the three Mechanism fugitives for the Arusha branch, and the possible appeals in the Šešelj, Karadžić and Hadžić cases, which are anticipated during the next 12 months. As a matter of fact, recruitment has already commenced in order to manage those three possible appeals.

We will continue our policy of active engagement with the countries in the former Yugoslavia in order to strengthen the close collaboration with them that has so far yielded good results in the arrest and prosecution of persons responsible for crimes committed in those territories. I anticipate that the forthcoming international conference scheduled for Sarajevo and the Brijuni meeting of regional prosecutors this month will both provide opportunities for further consultations with our regional partners on the intensification of cooperation with and assistance to the national jurisdictions of the former Yugoslavia in their efforts to ensure accountability for the serious crimes committed in that region during the conflict.

The Office of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism continues to provide assistance to national authorities and international organizations in the investigation and prosecution of crimes committed in Rwanda and in the States of the former Yugoslavia. In the past six months, the Office has serviced a total of 208 requests for assistance from 10 countries and international organizations. As countries increasingly take over the functions of investigating and prosecuting those crimes, we anticipate an increase in the number of such requests for assistance from States and institutes.

I wish to thank the members of the Council, the Member States, the Secretary-General and the United Nations Secretariat for their very strong support to the ICTR over the years, which has enabled the Tribunal to now reach this momentous stage in its mandate. Their unflinching commitment to the cause of international criminal justice has also enabled the Mechanism to take off and begin to execute its functions effectively in a very short period.

The President: I thank Mr. Jallow for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Since this is the first time I am taking the floor in the Chamber this month, I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council and to assure you of Chile's full support this month. Moreover, I would like to congratulate the delegation of Lithuania, in particular its Ambassador, on its outstanding work last month.

My delegation thanks the Presidents of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, as well as the Prosecutors, for their briefings on the implementation of the completion strategy for both ad hoc Tribunals during the period from November 2014 through last May, in accordance with resolution 1534 (2004), as well as with respect to the operations of the Residual Mechanism during the transition phase, covering the same period and in accordance with resolution 1966 (2010).

Their reports show the progress that has been made by the Tribunals and the Mechanism in the implementation of their judicial and administrative tasks in The Hague and in Arusha. In this context, and in the framework of the implementation of resolution 2194 (2014), we would like to acknowledge the work carried out by Judge Sekule of Tanzania, Güney of Turkey and Robinson of Jamaica, who have completed their respective terms of office.

In particular, we welcome the fact that the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia handed down appeals judgements in the cases of *Vujadin Popović* and *Zdravko Tolimir* in January and April, respectively. We also welcome the fact that in April the Appeals Chamber of the Rwanda Tribunal heard oral arguments in the Butare case, the only remaining case, in which a decision is expected during the last quarter of this year, and that the Mechanism handed down its first decision in the *Ngirabatware* appeal last December.

With regard to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, my delegation welcomes the fact that the

transition to the Residual Mechanism is to be concluded shortly and that the completion strategy for the Tribunal is proceeding in keeping with set timelines.

Chile reiterates its concern that a swift resolution be found to both the situation pertaining to the 11 people in Tanzania who must be relocated and who are living in a safe house in Arusha, with due consideration being given to the humanitarian aspects of this case, as well as to that of the nine people indicted by the Rwanda Tribunal who remain at large, six of whom fall under its jurisdiction and three under that of the Residual Mechanism. International cooperation must be intensified in both cases so as to ensure proper accountability and to fully comply with the resolutions adopted by the Council.

Almost 20 years on from the genocide in Srebrenica, we recognize the contribution made by the Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the need to continue to support its work until its envisaged completion date, in 2017. The debate on the closure of the Tribunals gives us another opportunity to reflect on the ethical and legal responsibilities undertaken by the international community in the face of the most serious crimes, which cannot go unpunished.

These bodies, through their judicial activities, have made an effective contribution to reweaving the social fabric, which is essential to comprehensive national processes of post-conflict rehabilitation. They have also, and this is the central point, contributed to the progressive development of international criminal law, providing the impetus for the creation of the International Criminal Court as an independent permanent criminal court linked to the United Nations system, with jurisdiction over the most serious crimes of major importance to the international community as a whole.

In this context, and as Chair of the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals, I would like once again to express the commitment of my country to the work of the Tribunals and to the Mechanism. We are convinced that cooperation in the completion strategy represents one of the most direct ways for the Council to contribute to the effectiveness of these legal mechanisms.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): I wish at the outset to congratulate Malaysia on its assumption of the presidency and thank the Ambassador of Lithuania for their very effective conduct of our business last month.

New Zealand reaffirms its strong support for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) as well as for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, and we thank Presidents Meron and Joensen and Prosecutors Brammertz and Jallow for their briefings.

New Zealand was on the Council more than 20 years ago, when the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda were established. When the ICTY resolution was adopted, we stressed the importance of the Tribunal operating independently and impartially. We also emphasized the need for it to be enabled to carry out its work until it had discharged its mandate or the Council had decided its work should end.

We took the same stance with the ICTR and worked hard to ensure that the provisions of its Statute were both consistent with that of the ICTY and suitable to the circumstances of Rwanda and acceptable to the Government of Rwanda, despite the differences of view between Rwanda and the rest of the Council over the applicability of the death penalty.

It is fair to say that I did not expect the Tribunals to still be on the Council's agenda when I returned here 20 years later. But that should not be seen as a failure. During that period, both Tribunals have managed complex criminal proceedings. Both have added breadth and depth to international criminal jurisprudence in relation to some of the most horrific crimes in recent history. These proceedings have taken time, partly because of the challenges associated with locating those charged. While the ICTY has now achieved this, several ICTR fugitives remain at large who, once apprehended, will need to be prosecuted through the Residual Mechanism or by the Rwandan Government.

The ICTY's recent experience has demonstrated the central role that States can play in apprehending fugitives, and we encourage similar cooperation in relation to the ICTR's work. New Zealand acknowledges both Tribunals' efforts to implement their completion strategies. The Residual Mechanism has now assumed responsibility for many functions. While the transition appears to be going well, some critical work remains to be done. But we are pleased to see that the formal closure of the ICTR is still on track for the end of 2015, with only liquidation activities remaining. We

encourage the ICTY to step up its efforts to ensure that its proceedings are completed by 2017.

The ICTY and ICTR also engage in wider activities that contribute to the advancement of international criminal justice. Both have a mandate to share information as part of broader reconciliation processes. They, of course, deal only with the most serious offenders. National courts have a role in continuing their legacy through prosecutions, as do other bodies that allow relevant crimes to be acknowledged in some way. This is necessary if the communities affected are to move on.

New Zealand has consistently drawn attention to the need to ensure that the Tribunals enjoy the same levels of support at their closure as they did at inception. This is also true for other similar current and future judicial institutions. It is not credible for the Council to wash its hands of these bodies after their establishment. Rather, we as the Council have an ongoing responsibility to continue providing the support necessary — in terms of resources as well as political support — for the Tribunals to complete their mandates.

There are valuable lessons to be learned from the Tribunals' experiences in managing judicial, administrative and prosecutorial functions that should be shared. These include challenges associated with winding up a Tribunal, such as problems with senior staff retention and the impact on managing caseloads. We thank Mr. Joensen for his assurances that the ICTR is already addressing these lessons-learned issues.

While the Council has a responsibility to the Tribunals, the Tribunals, in turn, have a responsibility to work as effectively and efficiently as possible. This responsibility is not only to meet Council deadlines but, moreover, to meet the legitimate expectations of victims, for whom these Tribunals were ultimately established.

Mr. Zagaynov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the heads of the Tribunals and the Residual Mechanism for briefing us on the judicial proceedings, the speed at which they are winding up and the transition to the Residual Mechanism.

In resolutions 2193 (2014) and 2194 (2014), the Security Council took a step in the direction of both Tribunals by agreeing to an extension of their judges' terms of office. Mindful of the serious problems facing the work of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the Council urgently called on this body to step up its efforts to compress the timelines for the completion of its cases. We take note of the information in the ICTY's current report (S/2015/342, annex) on the steps that have been taken in that regard. So far, however, they have not produced results. That can only arouse serious concern. The staffing problems that the ICTY report mentions can hardly represent an adequate explanation of the situation. It would seem that the Tribunal retains staffing resources sufficient to organizing its proceedings without compromising the speed of its work. Nor do the other reasons cited seem overwhelming.

Apart from that, we would like to comment on the situation regarding those accused with serious health problems. For example, the report says that the trial of Goran Hadžić was suspended as early as October 2014 owing to the state of his health. In our view, the ICTY Trial Chamber and Prosecutor could analyse how best to deal with getting on with the proceedings while taking the humanitarian considerations into account. Delays in the Tribunal will result in unprecedentedly long pre-trial detention periods for the accused. Such practices, by raising questions related to the right to a fair trial, can hardly serve as examples for national or international courts in the future. We believe the Tribunal leadership can rectify the situation, shorten the projected time frames for completing proceedings and ensure the Tribunal's speedy transfer of its duties, in accordance with the Security Council's requests. We call on it to take all necessary measures and expect to see results by the end of the year.

We welcome the information from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda confirming that it will complete the closure of its activities this current year. We note the important role that States in both the regions concerned and other countries have played in supporting the Tribunals and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. According to the ICTY Prosecutor's report, they have demonstrated a high level of cooperation, particularly Serbia, whose efforts have made a major contribution to completing a number of the Tribunal's judicial proceedings.

The Residual Mechanism has rendered its first judgement, and progress is being made in carrying out other uncompleted functions of the Tribunals. We expect the Mechanism's activities to be as effective as possible, given the temporary nature of its mandate as laid down in resolution 1966 (2010). In that context, we recall that according to paragraph 17 of that resolution,

the initial four-year period for the Mechanism's operation will end a year from now, and that in order for it to continue to operate, a review must be conducted of its work during that period.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening this debate, and the Presidents and Prosecutors for their thorough reports. Spain, of course, would like to commend the Tribunals, their Presidents, Prosecutors and all their staff for their work in combating impunity.

I would like to begin with the work of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. We are pleased to see that it is still committed to completing its work by December 2017. With regard to the four cases outstanding, we understand that there are reasons for the recent delays, particularly the Tribunal's staffing reductions and the health problems of the accused. However, we agree with the Prosecutor that as time goes on, the risk increases that delays in bringing justice will eventually become a denial of justice. We urge the Tribunal and its staff to spare no effort to conclude the four proceedings as quickly as possible.

Concerning the *Šešelj* case, we note the recent decision of the Appeal Chamber, on 30 March, to revoke the accused's provisional release in view of his conduct, and we condemn the expression of any revisionist views that would offend the memory of the victims and undermine the foundations for reconciliation. With regard to the appeals proceedings, we welcome the two judgements handed down in January and April. There are now three cases outstanding and we once again urge the Tribunal to minimize delays and expedite their conclusion. We are worried about the slow pace of the activities of the national authorities, particularly in the referrals of mid-level and high-profile cases, and about the politicization of the proceedings. We call for respect for judicial independence as an essential foundation for the rule of law, and for intensifying efforts to exercise true national justice in the wake of conflict.

However, we welcome the progress that has been made in regional cooperation, including the arrest of eight people suspected of participating in crimes related to the genocide in Srebrenica, whose twentieth anniversary is next month, in July. For the Tribunal to carry on with its work and complete it successfully, it is essential that all of us — every State in the international community as well as international organizations, including the United Nations and particularly the Security Council — continue to support it to the very end. The support of regional organizations is also vital, especially the European Union, NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe. Finally, we call on the Tribunal to continue to transfer its responsibilities to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals in order to ensure a smooth, problem-free transition.

Turning to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, we are pleased with the information provided and hope that the conclusion of the work on first-instance judgements for the last remaining case on appeal, *Nyiramasuhuko et al. (Butare)*, will continue to make progress, as it has done in the past few months, and that it can be concluded by the fourth quarter of this year, which will make it possible to close the Tribunal's doors in December.

It is worrying that nine of the accused indicted by the Tribunal for their participation in the genocide in Rwanda — three of them senior officials — remain at large. We call on the Rwandan authorities and those responsible for the Residual Mechanism to ensure that they locate them and bring them to justice, whether before the Mechanism, for the three aforementioned officials, or before the Rwandan judicial authorities for the remaining six. We also call for the cooperation of those States where they may be found.

We commend the staff of the Tribunal and the Mechanism for the exemplary manner in which the transfer of the Tribunal's functions is being carried out and for the information on the progress of the transfer in every area: administrative, judicial and archival. We are aware that there continue to be humanitarian issues for people who have been acquitted by the Tribunal or who have completed their sentences, and we would like solutions to be found as soon as possible in order to enable them to find somewhere to live in safety and dignity.

Finally, I should like to comment about the importance of publicizing the work of the Tribunals. As their work comes to an end, it will be more important than ever to ensure that their work is adequately publicized in order to raise people's awareness of such situations, especially young people, and to help to increase the effectiveness of the work of other international courts and tribunals, including the International Criminal Court (ICC) and national courts, which I am sure can benefit from the lessons learned and best practices that both Tribunals have developed over more than two

decades. We cannot underestimate the value of such experience in raising awareness, among young people, as well as professionals in other courts and the ICC, through, for example, the workshops organized by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to explain gender-related crimes and the use of multidisciplinary expert teams and lessons learned in locating fugitives, which, along with the work of the current Prosecutor of the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, are very valuable and deserve our support.

In conclusion, although we are convinced that the conclusion of the process will be in everyone's interest, especially that of the victims and above all that of justice, we must agree with Judge Meron that the delays in the completion of the completion strategy must in no way impede the overall work of the Tribunals. All those who, in one way or another, have served the Tribunals should be rightly proud; they have participated in an admirable, very difficult endeavour that has finally reached a successful conclusion that is important for international criminal law and for the hopes of the victims who merely wish to obtain justice. That work has contributed in a decisive manner to the re-establishment of the rule of law in Rwanda and in the States of the former Yugoslavia.

In one month, we shall commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre — an appropriate time to remember the victims and to entrench reconciliation, supported by an understanding of the facts and the need to hold those responsible accountable. In 1993 and 1994, the Council adopted resolutions 827 (1993) and 955 (1994), establishing the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and demonstrated the strength of its commitment to the fight against impunity.

We must recognize that this is not sufficient. New atrocities are being committed every day in Syria, Libya, South Sudan and elsewhere in the world. Our work is therefore far from over. We must reaffirm our commitment and ensure that those who are responsible for the most serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights receive the clear and unequivocal message that their acts will not go unpunished. It is our duty to do this, and it will be the best tribute that we can pay to victims and to the men and women who work every day to provide justice in bodies such as those bodies represented here today.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): I thank our briefers, Presidents Meron and Joensen and Prosecutors Brammertz and Jallow, for their informative briefings.

Nigeria commends the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for the steady process it has made towards completing its work. We note that that Tribunal has concluded proceedings against 147 out of 161 persons indicted. We also note that there are no ICTY fugitives. We acknowledge the constraints faced by the ICTY, which made it difficult to complete some trials and appeals by the target date of 31 December 2014. We encourage the Tribunal to continue to work efficiently to complete outstanding judicial proceedings.

We note that the ICTY has been experiencing difficulties with the recruitment and retention of staff. It is a matter of concern to us that this situation is impeding the work of the Tribunal. We commend the Tribunal for its efforts to improve the retention and recruitment of staff in its challenging circumstances and hope that those efforts will yield positive outcomes. In terms of communications and outreach, we commend the ICTY Media Office for facilitating the work of journalists covering the activities of the Tribunal. This has indeed helped to promote transparency in the work of the Tribunal. We acknowledge the significant contributions of the ICTY outreach programme to the debate on transitional justice and post-conflict recovery in the former Yugoslavia.

Concerning the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Nigeria welcomes the progress made in implementing its completion strategy. The successful handover of most judicial and prosecutoral functions to the Residual Mechanism is an important indication of that progress. In terms of best practices and lessons learned, we commend the ICTR for its cooperation with other tribunals and the International Criminal Court in sharing perspectives. We also commend the prosecutor of the ICTR for producing a manual on best practices for the referral of international criminal cases to national jurisdictions for trial.

We note the staffing problems that the ICTR is experiencing, which are similar to those faced by the ICTY. We hope that sustainable solutions will be found in an expedient manner in order to facilitate the work of the Tribunal. We encourage all States to cooperate with the Residual Mechanism to ensure that the nine people indicted by the ICTR who remain at large are

apprehended. They are fugitives from the law and must face justice for their participation in the genocide in Rwanda.

Finally, we commend Judge Meron and Judge Joensen for their astute leadership and assure them of our continued support.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): I thank Presidents Meron and Joensen and Prosecutors Brammertz and Jallow for their reports and, as always, for their steadfast dedication to advancing global justice. At this time, I would like to express particular gratitude and thanks to President Meron in his last briefing before the Council as President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). We greatly appreciate his dedicated service as President of both the ICTY and the Residual Mechanism. He has tirelessly dedicated much of his professional life to international justice and contributed immensely to the jurisprudence of international criminal law. International justice has been well served and continues to be well served by his leadership.

The seeds of international criminal justice were planted 70 years ago with the drafting of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal. The Nuremberg Charter provided for a fair judicial process for leaders of the Nazi regime who would face trial in Nuremberg. The Charter and the ensuing trials ensured that those accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity would face justice before the world. Indeed, while the world faces the continued horrors of mass atrocities in Syria, South Sudan, the Sudan, the Central African Republic and elsewhere, the ICTY, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals stand as examples and important reminders that where there is will, perpetrators of mass atrocities can indeed be brought to justice.

As always, the United States supports the ongoing efforts of the ICTY to complete its remaining trials and appeals expeditiously, efficiently and thoroughly, while pressing international justice forward and ensuring that the accused are given a fair trial. We note that appeals judgements have been rendered in the *Popović* and *Tolomir* cases, and we await judgement this year in the trial of Radovan Karadžić. Together with Ratko Mladić, Karadžić stands accused of crimes that include responsibly for the Srebrenica massacre, the twentieth anniversary of which falls on 11 July. Srebrenica, of course, was the single worst crime committed in Europe since the Second World War. It is hoped that the victims and survivors of Srebrenica will have an outcome that can help bring closure to that most disturbing and painful chapter in the history of the former Yugoslavia.

We also await judgement in the trial of Vojislav Šešelj for crimes against humanity and violations of the laws and customs of war. The United States once again condemns his incendiary public rhetoric — rhetoric that challenges regional reconciliation and threatens to open tragic wounds of the past, since his provisional release by the Court on humanitarian grounds last November. We continue to urge all Governments and leaders of the region to cooperate with the Court's orders, to continue working towards reconciliation and to avoid inflammatory statements.

Last year, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda completed all of its trials of first instance as the world marked two decades since the Rwandan genocide. We recognize and appreciate the ICTR's continuing efforts to finish appeals in a timely manner. We also continue to commend the ongoing efforts of the Presidents and Prosecutors to efficiently transfer the remaining functions to the Residual Mechanism, while at the same time preserving the fairness and impartiality of the judicial process.

The effort to ensure that those accused by the ICTY — all 161 out of 161 — were brought to justice was unprecedented in the history of international justice. It required the international community to use the full range of resources and tools at our disposal: legal, financial and political. This included the conditioning of bilateral economic assistance on a State's compliance with its obligations under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to enforce arrest warrants issued by judges of the ICTY. Most significant in terms of its impact, as implemented by the European Union (EU), with the steadfast support of EU member States, was the requirement of full and complete cooperation with the ICTY before a country could be considered for accession to the EU.

United Nations peacekeeping missions and multinational NATO forces worked with the Tribunals, international law enforcement and national authorities to assist in apprehending fugitives. INTERPOL shared information, and training programmes strengthened the capacity for national police authorities to locate and

arrest war crimes fugitives. The United States offered rewards of up to $5 million for information leading to their arrest and, following those arrests, paid significant rewards in a number of cases.

To achieve the same success for the ICTR and ensure that the nine remaining ICTR fugitives, who are mass murderers, are brought to justice, we have been working closely with the same organizations: the United Nations, national authorities, international law enforcement and, most importantly, the ICTR and the Residual Mechanism. As with the ICTY fugitives, the United States continues to offer up to $5 million in rewards for information leading to the arrest of the nine ICTR fugitives, whether they will be prosecuted in the Residual Mechanism or in Rwandan courts. We call for full international cooperation in tracking and arresting these men. We remain deeply committed to apprehending those nine fugitives, who include three leaders believed to have carried out key roles in the Rwandan genocide: Félicien Kabuga, alleged to have financed atrocities; Augustin Bizimana, the Minister of Defence, alleged to have ordered his subordinates to carry out horrific crimes; Protais Mpiranya, the Commander of the Presidential Guard, alleged to have carried out targeted assassinations from the moment the genocide began. These men have not escaped our continued attention and our steadfast determination to see each of them face justice. If we forget them, we fail their victims and the survivors, and we will not and cannot fail them.

Justice and accountability for the victims and survivors of mass atrocities and accountability for the perpetrators remain a critical requirement of any real peace. The ICTY and ICTR have ensured justice for the victims of some of the worst mass murderers and criminals in the history of the world. They have made immeasurable contributions to ensuring accountability, advancing peace and reconciliation and promoting truth and justice. Their work and legacy should serve as a reminder of what is possible when the world is committed to responding to crimes that shock the conscience, and they should serve as a cold rebuke to those who continue to commit such crimes under the mistaken belief that somehow we will just give up on accountability and move on from the push for justice. At the very least, the ICTY and ICTR are a reminder that we will not do so, and a reminder that we will fulfil our commitment to the victims of these atrocities and their survivors because we cannot and will not forget.

Mr. Stehelin (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Presidents Meron and Joensen and Prosecutors Jallow and Brammertz for their reports and their very comprehensive briefings. France reiterates its thanks to all the staff of the Tribunals for the work carried out to complete the pending proceedings.

We also welcome the transition that has been taking place since 1 January 2012 in accordance with resolution 1966 (2010) to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) branches of the Residual Mechanism in order to allow the work of justice to continue and run its course. We note in this regard that 76 per cent of those recruited were from the Tribunals' teams, which should contribute to the effectiveness of the work and to support provided for the completion of the Tribunals' work.

France pays close attention to the Tribunals as they strive to reach their goal of delivering justice in the context of the completion strategy and in full respect for procedural safeguards. It is to that end that the Council adopted resolutions 2193 (2014) and 2194 (2014) on 18 December 2014.

Regarding the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, difficulties arising from the departure of key personnel and the advanced age of some of the accused are all factors that help to explain the delay in meeting the deadlines established. This delay makes resolute measures for an optimal allocation of resources all the more necessary in order to prevent gaps. As stated in resolution 2193 (2014) of 18 December 2014, the ICTY must continue its efforts to complete its work as quickly as possible and facilitate the earliest possible end closure in order to wrap up the transition to the Mechanism. France welcomes in this regard the transfer of ICTY records to the Mechanism, which began in January 2015.

With respect to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, France wishes to acknowledge the importance of the closure of the Tribunal by the end of 2015, according to the timetable contained in resolution 2194 (2014). The continued downsizing of staff charged with administrative and judicial activities is a positive sign of a transfer of powers to the Mechanism, which has already shouldered its responsibility to handle the first appeal of a Tribunal judgment on 18 December 2014.

The arrest and transfer of the remaining fugitives and the relocation of the 11 persons released after acquittal or completion of sentence, who are still in Arusha, will remain priorities for the Mechanism. France reiterates that it will provide the same support to the Mechanism as that given to the ICTR and calls on all States to cooperate in this regard. Furthermore, I would reiterate that France will spare no effort, in particular as regards the two cases referred by the ICTR to the French courts.

The twentieth anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre, which has been described as genocide by both the ICTY and the International Court of Justice, will be commemorated this year. On that occasion, we must welcome the important work carried out by the ICTY. The Tribunal is the guarantor of the right to truth, the exposure of facts, the fight against impunity and the duty to remember. Through its judgements, its decisive role in cooperation and mutual assistance between various State prosecutors to prosecute so-called intermediary criminals and its scope, it has played a central role in national and regional reconciliation and in reconstruction.

We continue to believe that regional and national cooperation is the heart of an effective transition. It is now up to the countries concerned to continue to build States in which the rule of law prevails and the independence of the judiciary is ensured. The prosecution of so-called mid-level criminals must remain a priority in that respect. Progress made in the *Štrpci* case, with the arrest by the Serbian authorities in March of eight persons suspected of involvement in the Srebrenica massacre, is an encouraging example but must be part of an ongoing strategy.

The International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda are a major step in the fight against impunity. While the Tribunals are implementing their completion strategies, we need to recognize their work in terms of jurisprudence, which must be kept alive. Archive management, the dissemination of this work and capacity-building are an essential link for the victims and the international community as a whole.

Mr. Suárez Moreno (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Madam President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of June and assure you that you can count on our support. I would also like to extend our thanks to the Lithuanian delegation for the work carried out during the month of May. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Presidents Meron and Joensen and Prosecutors Brammertz and Jallow for the reports they presented and to recognize the leadership of Chile at the head the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supports the arduous work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in prosecuting and sentencing those responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes that shocked the conscience of humankind. The work of the Tribunals has bolstered the international community's resolve to guarantee that those responsible for such abominable acts will not enjoy impunity. We hope that the efforts of Member States will be consistent in ensuring that acts as horrific as those that occurred in those countries will not be repeated.

Now, as we approach the closure of these Tribunals and the transfer to the International Residual Mechanism of their archives on the cases of the fugitives, cases of contempt or of perjury, and on the protection of victims and witnesses, we consider it important to highlight the need for cooperation from States to ensure compliance with all the mandates set forth in resolution 1966 (2010). Without such support, the Mechanism will fail to achieve its goals.

In relation to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, it is important to note that final verdicts have been handed down in 147 of the 161 individual cases assigned to it. To date, the Tribunal has not had before it a single case involving a fugitive from justice, but we observe with great concern that although over two decades have elapsed since the creation of the Tribunal, several proceedings at the trial level remain ongoing, due to procedural delays on various grounds that we believe could be effectively resolved so that the trials could be completed within an established time frame while guaranteeing the principles of due process and judicial impartiality. It is not enough for judges to act independently and impartially; they should also conduct proceedings and issue their judgements in a timely manner because justice delayed is justice denied.

Our delegation acknowledges the work undertaken by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to complete the cases of 93 defendants, leaving only one case pending in the Appeals Chamber — the *Nyiramasuhuko et al. (Butare)* case — which involves

six accused, the completion of which is expected at the end of this year. With respect to the nine cases of fugitives from justice that were referred to the jurisdiction of the national courts of Rwanda and the other three cases transferred to the Residual Mechanism, we encourage the authorities to locate, apprehend and prosecute those charged to as soon as possible. As long as that has not occurred, we cannot speak of justice having been served.

With regard to those who have completed their sentences or have been acquitted, the ICTR has transferred these cases to the Residual Mechanism to assist in their relocation in view of the fact that it is a humanitarian issue requiring the international community's cooperation. Only then will these people be able to reintegrate into society. In this regard, we support the strategic plan adopted by the Residual Mechanism consisting of expanding efforts to find suitable places for relocation and thereby providing them with appropriate humanitarian assistance that would help limit the financial costs of their upkeep.

Finally, we appeal to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to continue to take all measures necessary to complete its work expeditiously and ensure that all cases still in proceedings be completed in 2017, as has been planned. In this way, the commitment it made to the international community to promote the rule of law and end impunity would be fulfilled.

Mrs. Alingue (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I would like to congratulate the delegation of Malaysia on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and wish you, Madam President, every success — for yourself and for your team — in taking on your mission; Chad assures you of its support. I would also like to acknowledge the excellent Lithuanian presidency for the month of May and personally congratulate Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė and her team for that success. I also thank the Presidents and Prosecutors of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Residual Mechanism for their respective briefings and reports.

We take due note of the significant efforts made by the Tribunals to complete their work in spite of the obstacles that remain as the completion date of ICTY approaches. In the six months elapsed, the judicial and legal activity of the ICTR essentially brought about the completion of the appeals pending and the transition towards the Residual Mechanism, which continued to benefit from its technical and administrative support. Given that this transition is nearly completed, there remains one trial on appeal before the Tribunal — namely, the *Nyiramasuhuko et al. (Butare)* case — before its completion scheduled for this year. The Tribunal nevertheless continues the reduction of its staff while providing assistance to Rwandan national courts in the context of cases that are being transferred to them.

We also take due note of the activities carried out during the last six months and encourage all teams to complete their work on time. However, we regret that the six fugitives have not yet been found. In this regard, we call on the countries where they are supposedly located to show solidarity with the Republic of Rwanda which must rebuild its nation scarred by genocide by having the fugitives tried by the Residual Mechanism and, in particular, by its own national courts.

Regarding the ICTY, it is also actively working to wrap up its mission, particularly in the context of its completion strategy. With the passing of two important rulings during the period covered by the reports, there remain seven judgements and orders to be made. We should acknowledge in this regard that of the 161 accused 147 have received final verdicts. The ICTY's communication activities and efforts to heighten awareness continue to develop. However, the European Union funding for this purpose will end in August, which suggests that there will be difficulties in pursuing these efforts.

Delays in keeping on schedule remain for various reasons. Many postponements of judgements and appeals will be logged in spite of the predictions made in the latest report. The health of some defendants, the slow pace of the process, among other things, have delayed the Tribunal's work during this period, but the great challenge remains the departure of staff. Although these problems are known, they could not be avoided despite the warning by the Tribunal, which came up with solutions that unfortunately did not receive the necessary support of the competent United Nations entities. In this context, we encourage the Tribunal to continue implementing its strategy to completion while continuing to consider appropriate diligent steps that it intends to take to achieve that end. That having been said, we believe it is also important that the Tribunal further streamlines the judicial activities in order to avoid the accumulation of delays.

Mr. Ibrahim returned to the Chair.

In conclusion, we regret the lack of progress in the cooperation between the Tribunal and some States of the region to try alleged perpetrators. In this regard we encourage States to make every effort to see that these judgements take place as soon as possible.

Ms. Mulvein (United Kingdom): I thank the Tribunal and Mechanism Presidents and Prosecutors for their briefings and their reports.

I would like to begin by emphasizing the United Kingdom's continued support for the important work of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. Through their efforts, we will hold to account the perpetrators of some of the most heinous crimes of the twentieth century.

On the ICTY, we are pleased that the appeals of the *Popović et al.* and *Tolimir* cases have now been completed. We hope that the timetable for the *Karadžić*, trial is maintained and that a means can be found to complete *Hadžić* trial. Now that the Office of the Prosecutor has filed a motion to proceed in *Hadžić*, we look forward to hearing the trial chamber's decision on the case soon. On the *Mladić* case, we recognize the importance of new evidence presented in that trial and we now look forward to the case's timely resolution. We note that the set-out judgement is due at the end of 2015 and we also understand the complexities with the defendant's revoked provisional release. We hope that the remaining three appeals can also be completed within the timetable set forth in the ICTY report. We encourage the Tribunal to continue with its efforts to conclude its work in an expeditious and timely manner.

It is encouraging that the Office of the Prosecutor for the ICTY remains satisfied with the cooperation it has received from the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia, and the United Kingdom welcomes their continued cooperation. It is also positive that the search for missing persons has been reinvigorated in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We support the Prosecutor's call for accelerated searches for and exhumation of mass graves and identification of remains, and we urge the Bosnia and Herzegovina Governments at the State and entity levels to support those efforts. However, the Prosecutor again raises concerns about the significant challenges that remain with respect to regional prosecutions of war crimes, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That risks breaching the time lines of the National War Crimes Strategy. We are concerned that only a fraction of cases have been prosecuted at the national level and that regional war crimes prosecution continue to face systemic and persistent challenges.

Turning to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), we are pleased that the Tribunal remains on track to complete its one remaining case, *Nyiramasuhuko et al. (Butare)*, at the end of 2015, with the formal closure of the ICTR by the end of this year. But the failure to apprehend the nine fugitives remains a cause for concern. We encourage all States to provide their full support to Rwanda and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals to ensure their arrests. The work of ensuring accountability cannot be completed until those individuals have been brought to justice. We thank the ICTR for their efforts in trying to resolve the problem of relocating the individuals in Arusha, and we are pleased that the Mechanism has adopted a strategic plan for that. We also welcome discussions on reparations for victims. As the Rwandan Government remains in consultation with the International Organization for Migration on the draft assessment study with recommendations, we would be grateful for a progress update.

In regard to the Mechanism, we welcome the news that it has delivered its first appeal judgement and is now reviewing referred cases. We also commend the significant progress on administrative issues, including the staff at work on the permanent premises in Arusha. We commend both Tribunals for the ongoing transition of activities to the Mechanism. A smooth transition is a priority, and we encourage the Tribunals and the Mechanism to continue to work together to meet the joint aims of the completion strategies.

Let me close by echoing Prosecutor Brammetz's call for the international community to use the twentieth anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide to reaffirm its commitment to achieving justice. The anniversary should be foremost a time to pay respects to the victims and their families as well as to all innocent victims of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): At the outset, Mr. President, let me express our congratulations to your delegation, Malaysia, on presiding over the Security Council for the month of June. I also commend the work performed by the Lithuanian presidency during the previous month of May.

We thank the Presidents and Prosecutors of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Residual Mechanism for the briefings they have provided the Council, and we assure them of Angola's full support.

By establishing the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the Security Council responded to the universal plea for the global strengthening of the rule of the law and the end of impunity. Over the past 20 years, the ICTY and the ICTR have played a crucial role in promoting the rule of law by making a meaningful contribution to ending impunity for those responsible for committing war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. On the eve of their closure, we recognize the remarkable achievements of the International Criminal Tribunals and their contribution to international justice and the rule of law.

The ICTY has now concluded proceedings against 147 out of 161 indicted individuals, including two important appeals cases. Seven trials and appeals, involving the last 14 of the 161 indicted, remain outstanding. The Tribunal is making efforts to meet the targets for its completion strategy and to ensure a smooth transition to the Mechanism in compliance with resolution 1966 (2010). We welcome the non-existence of ICTY fugitives and the Tribunal's commitment to the expeditious completion of its work while ensuring that the trials and appeals are conducted in a manner consistent with the fundamental principles of due process and equity.

Despite the continued challenges, such as delays in trials and appeals, we are reassured that steps are being taken for the completion of all judicial proceedings by 2017. We note with satisfaction that the Office of the Prosecutor remains focused on completing the remaining trials and appeals while reducing costs and downsizing staff. With respect to the regional prosecution of war crimes, we support the efforts of the Office of the Prosecutor to encourage the improvement of regional cooperation concerning war crimes.

In regard to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, while the formal closure of the Tribunal is planned to occur by the end of 2015, we commend the work it has accomplished by concluding the trials of all 93 indicted individuals. We are concerned that nine of those indicted by the ICTR for their participation in the genocide in Rwanda remain at large with three of the fugitives being underthe jurisdiction of the Mechanism and the remaining six referred to the Rwandan authorities. Thus, pursuant to resolution 1966 (2010), the responsibility for tracking and trying them remains with the Republic of Rwanda and the Residual Mechanism, which will require the cooperation of all States to ensure that there will be no impunity for the perpetrators of the genocide in Rwanda.

We note with satisfaction that the transition to the Residual Mechanism is close to completion, most judicial and prosecutorial functions have already been handed over and administrative arrangements have been put in place. We value the sharing of lessons learned by the Tribunals in the management of judicial, administrative and prosecutorial functions with other international and national jurisdictions as well as with the public. Important challenges remain, including reparations for victims and the relocation of the acquitted and the convicted by the Tribunal. Those are tasks that must be carefully addressed so that the work of the Tribunal fully impacts on peace and reconciliation in Rwanda.

Concerning the Residual Mechanism, we would like to underscore the relevance of working closely with the Tribunal principals and staff members to ensure a smooth transition of the remaining functions and services and the examination and adoption of best practices. The communication and cooperation with the States of the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda by keeping them updated on the activities of the Mechanism and the transition of responsibilities, as well as the assistance to national jurisdictions, are most welcome. We greatly value the support afforded to the Mechanism by the ICTR, the ICTY, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Department of Management of the Secretariat, and concerned States, which will be crucial to ensuring the success of the Mechanism. We are encouraged by the fact that the arrests and surrender of the remaining fugitives have been set as priorities by the Residual Mechanism, taking into account that the ongoing operations on tracking renegades, conducted by the Prosecutor, require the full cooperation of the States.

Finally, we would like to highlight that the principles of international criminal justice embodied in the Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda have been crucial in the recovery processes of those countries, following the horrific events that took place in their territories. It is expected that the international community will continue supporting

the Tribunals in their remaining work, including by ensuring adequate resources to permit their achievement of the goals set by the Security Council with a view to securing lasting peace and the Tribunals' legacy.

At a time of widespread atrocities, the international community is challenged to take stock of the legacy of the ICTY, the ICTR, the Residual Mechanism and the other international tribunals, as a concrete expression of its commitment to end impunity and its pledge to a world where the rule of law prevails.

Mr. Omaish (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset I would like to welcome Judges Meron and Joensen and Prosecutors Brammertz and Jallow and thank them for their outstanding achievements and the exceptional work carried out by the Tribunals.

The Council established both the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in response to crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide and in order to ensure the prosecution of the perpetrators of such crimes, the fight against impunity and the promotion of the rule of law. Over the years, the Tribunals have made positive progress towards achieving their fundamental goals through the significant number of cases adjudicated and the few remaining cases, which together provide the best evidence of that progress.

Despite the challenges and financial costs of the investigations and trials, the Tribunals' accomplishments confirm the sound decision to establish them and to ensure their success. The Tribunals have played a crucial role in developing principles of international criminal law that are invoked today by the International Criminal Court and numerous international courts in rendering their decisions and judgements. We therefore encourage all international judicial institutions and national courts to make the best use of the Tribunals' judicial and administrative experience.

Achieving the fundamental goals of the Tribunals will require constructive cooperation and strong support, which Jordan continues to offer. The Tribunals must be supported by all available means to complete their work within the timeline set by their respective Presidents. At the same time, we stress the importance of a smooth transition to the Residual Mechanism and the implementation of the completion strategy after all trials have been finalized. In the current phase we must focus on the technical and administrative issues affecting the work of the Tribunals in order to ensure the effective completion of their work.

We are concerned about the remaining fugitives indicted by the ICTR and call on the relevant stakeholders to hand over those persons for whom arrest warrants remain outstanding.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): I would like to start by thanking you, Mr. President, for the very kind words addressed to my delegation and by wishing you all the very best during the month of May. I would like to thank Judges Meron and Joensen and Prosecutors Brammertz and Jallow for their extensive briefings today. Lithuania also reiterates its thanks to all of the staff of the Tribunals for their work.

The upcoming commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide is a sad reminder of that massive human tragedy and the dramatic failure to implement the responsibility to protect the population from genocide and crimes against humanity. At the same time, the anniversary once again recalls the importance of upholding and actively pursuing the accountability of those responsible for the most serious crimes.

Through its jurisprudence, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) has significantly contributed to international criminal law and continues to do so. Both Tribunals have played a historic role in the prosecution of wartime crimes of sexual violence, thereby paving the way for the adjudication of such crimes worldwide. Both have championed respect for the rule of law and have contributed to the necessary process of truth-seeking and reconciliation. The reports presented today clearly indicate that both Tribunals are moving steadily towards the completion of their mandates. We welcome the steps that they have taken to expedite their work and effectively conclude the cases still under consideration, while referring outstanding tasks to the Residual Mechanism.

With regard to the ICTY, the Tribunal made substantial progress during the most recent reporting period. Two appeal judgements were rendered, including the *Vujadin Popović et al.* case regarding five individuals convicted at trial. Only seven trials and appeals currently remain, involving the last 14 accused individuals and appellants. We are looking forward to the trial judgements in the *Vojislav Šešelj*, *Radovan Karadžić* and *Ratko Mladić* cases, involving three of the most important indictees, and encourage the ICTY

to take all appropriate measures to expedite decisions in those cases.

We note the concern over the high staff attrition rates expressed by the President of ICTY in his report (S/2015/342, annexes) and acknowledge the steps taken by the Tribunal to tackle that concern. Challenging circumstances and delays in judgements can jeopardize the course of justice. We acknowledge the challenges that the ICTY is facing in meeting the deadlines set for the remaining seven trials and encourage it to continue taking all measures necessary to minimize the delays.

Accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity depends on the timely completion of the remaining proceedings by the Tribunals and the Residual Mechanism. As the ICTY nears the completion of its mandate, accountability at the national level is of utmost importance. We welcome cooperation between the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICTY and the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia. At the same time, we would like to share the concerns expressed by Prosecutor Brammertz with regard to improper attempts to influence independent judicial authorities and to politicize war-crimes prosecutions. We urge concerned States to overcome the most serious barriers to national justice and to properly investigate and prosecute war crimes under their own jurisdiction.

With regard to the ICTR, we would like to commend the tireless work and dedication of the staff and judges in the continuing judicial and legal activities aimed at completing the work of the Tribunal. We welcome the fact that the transition to the Residual Mechanism is close to completion and that the Tribunal plans to close by the end of 2015. While the ICTR is completing its mandate, nine fugitives under ICTR indictment remain at large. We encourage all States to provide full support to Rwanda and the Mechanism so as to achieve the arrest and surrender of the fugitives.

We note that the Residual Mechanism, working closely with both Tribunals, has assumed many of their core functions, including with regard to the enforcement of sentences, the protection of victims and witnesses, the management of archives and the relocation of acquitted and released persons.

We take note of the remaining challenges regarding the relocation of acquitted individuals and those who have served the sentence imposed by the ICTR. Greater efforts are necessary to find a long-term solution to that issue. In the meantime, we encourage all States to cooper[illegible]ith a view to resolving the matter as quickly as possible.

While the ICTY and ICTR have dealt with some of the most gruesome crimes, mass atrocities continue to be committed in other parts of the world, and impunity continues to prevail. The legacy of both Tribunals has taken concrete form in the establishment of a permanent international criminal tribunal — the International Criminal Court (ICC) — which today lies at the heart of the entire criminal justice system of the international community. In that regard, support for the ICC is essential in order to ensure its ability to deliver justice to the numerous victims.

Mr. Li Yongsheng (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset I would like to thank President Meron, Prosecutor Brammertz, President Joensen and Prosecutor Jallow for their briefings on the work of the two Tribunals and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.

During the reporting period the two tribunals have continued to overcome various difficulties, such as the retention of staff, and have taken various steps to advance their work. The International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) delivered judgements on two appeal cases, and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda just heard oral arguments in the last appeal case. The Residual Mechanism is up and running, having delivered its first judgment. China acknowledges the results of those efforts but notes, at the same time, that, for various reasons, the ICTY has once again deferred the judgment delivery dates for certain cases.

With regard to the work of the two Tribunals and the Mechanism, I would like to put forward the following views. First, concerning the progress of the work of the two Tribunals, both are organs of international criminal justice established by the Council and in which the international community places its hopes for judicial justice. However, justice delayed is justice denied. The repeated delay in the work is not in line with the hopes of the Council and the regional countries. It is estimated that the ICTR will conclude its work by the end of 2015 and the ICTY by 2017. China hopes that, while ensuring judicial justice, the two Tribunals will organize their work properly, fully utilize available resources, improve judicial efficiency, expedite their work so as to avoid further delays and complete their work in 2015 and 2017, respectively.

Secondly, regarding cooperation with States, cooperation with States is crucial to the effective functioning of the two Tribunals and the Residual Mechanism. The arrest and transfer of fugitives, the collection of evidence and the enforcement of judgements are not possible without the cooperation of countries, especially those within the region. China has noted with appreciation that the Prosecutors of the two Tribunals and the Mechanism have expressed satisfaction with the cooperation received from Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Rwanda.

At present, the ICTR and the Mechanism face two challenges. One is the relocation of persons released and acquitted, and the second is the fact that nine of the indicted persons still remain at large. China appreciates the steps taken by the ICTR and the Mechanism to seek relocation for those released and acquitted. At the same time, we call on the countries concerned to demonstrate the political will to render further help to the ICTR and the Mechanism. On that issue, the ICTR and the Mechanism should also listen to the views of Rwanda and other countries. On the question of the tracking of fugitives, we hope that the ICTR, the Mechanism and the regional countries will devote more resources and enhance information-sharing, so as to arrest those criminals at an early date.

Thirdly, with regard to the transition to the Residual Mechanism, the ICTR and the ICTR branches of the Mechanism started their work in July 2012 and July 2013, respectively. At present, the ICTR's transition to the Mechanism is close to completion and the transition of the ICTY is progressing well. We hope that the two Tribunals will organize their work properly and enhance communication and coordination with the Mechanism in order to ensure the successful completion of the transition. In addition, before the final conclusion of their work, the two Tribunals should sum up lessons learned so as to assist the international community in combating impunity and in addressing the relationship between the maintenance of regional peace, the achievement of national reconciliation and the pursuit of judicial justice.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Chile, as the Chair of the Working Group on the International Tribunals, and the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs for their work.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Malaysia.

I wish to express my appreciation to Judge Theodor Meron, President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals; Judge Vagn Joensen, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR); Mr. Serge Brammertz, Prosecutor of the ICTY; and Mr. Hassan Bubacar Jallow, Prosecutor of the ICTR, for their reports.

More than 20 years ago, the world was shocked and horrified by reports regarding violations of international humanitarian law and the commission of atrocities such as war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. The establishment of the respective International Criminal Tribunals — namely, the ICTY and the ICTR — was the international community's firm response aimed at ensuring that the perpetrators of such atrocities would be held accountable for their acts.

As was the case last year, when we marked the twentieth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, we are mindful that this year will mark the twentieth anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. The anniversary serves as a recognition of the suffering of the victims and their families, and also as a painful reminder to all of us of our responsibility to ensure that such atrocities should not be repeated. We need to send a strong and unequivocal message that impunity will not be tolerated or allowed to stand.

Malaysia remains resolute that the perpetrators of such crimes must and will be brought to justice and that they will be held accountable. However painful that may be, we also believe that it is part of the healing, truth and reconciliation process that communities and States must undergo in order to seek and uphold justice. In that regard, Malaysia highly values and underscores its support for the work of the ICTY and the ICTR in upholding the rule of law and justice. We deeply acknowledge their contributions to the international justice system and to international peace and security and the rule of law.

Concerning the implementation of the completion strategy, we note the commitments made by their respective Presidents to ensuring that both Tribunals are on track to meet their respective completion deadlines, namely the end of this year for the ICTR and 2017 for the ICTY. We acknowledge the efforts that the Presidents of both Tribunals have undertaken to ensure the efficient transfer and transition of cases to the

Mechanism or to the national courts, where relevant. With respect to the ICTR, we note that its judicial and prosecutorial functions have already been handed over to the Residual Mechanism. The only pending case is the *Butare* appeal. Of the nine remaining fugitives, six will be referred to Rwanda, while the Residual Mechanism will try the remaining three top-priority fugitives. We highly encourage all States to extend their fullest cooperation to the ICTR so as to ensure the apprehension of all nine remaining fugitives.

With respect to the ICTY, we note that several factors, including the health of the accused, which has affected their ability to stand trial, as well as high staff attrition rates have resulted in requests for extensions of its mandate. We are especially mindful of the continuing risk that justice may be denied due to the medical conditions of several of the accused, which may prevent the completion of their trials and the determination of their guilt or innocence. While such consequences would be unfortunate, we believe that the factors involved were unavoidable and unintended. In that regard, we commend the President of the ICTY for taking the initiative to recruit personnel to fill existing staffing gaps in order to expedite the completion of cases.

We also acknowledge the Tribunals' continuing efforts to ensure that the lessons learned in managing the judicial, prosecutorial and administrative functions of an international tribunal are shared with other international and national jurisdictions and the public. It is important to encourage the sharing of best practices and lessons learned, for example by holding workshops with the participation of legal officers from the various international tribunals.

We are encouraged to see the relatively smooth transition of the two Tribunals to the Residual Mechanism, as demonstrated by the transfer of some judicial and administrative functions. We are confident that the Tribunals will carry out their work efficiently in accordance with the Security Council's resolutions.

We further wish to highly commend the cooperation of the States concerned and regional States with the Tribunals. It would not have been possible for the ICTR and ICTY to fulfil their obligations and mandate without the full cooperation of the respective States.

In conclusion, while we understand the concern at the delays in meeting the previous completion deadlines, we also understand the need to exercise some flexibility in this regard. We are assured of the commitment shown by the Presidents and Prosecutors of the Tribunals in carrying out their obligations and to meet their respective deadlines.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ms. Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina): First of all, my delegation wishes the Malaysian delegation a very successful presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am sure it will head our work in the very best way possible.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Presidents and Prosecutors of both Tribunals and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals for their reports (S/2015/340, S/2015/341 and S/2015/342) and for today's informative briefings. This year we will celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, mark 70 years since the Holocaust and 10 years since the establishment of the responsibility to protect, and remember the twentieth anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide.

A little over 20 years ago, the Security Council established the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which was the first war crimes court created by the United Nations and the first international war tribunal since the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals. Bosnia and Herzegovina has continuously supported the work of the ICTY and the ICTR and the contribution of the Tribunals to international criminal law, the rule of law and justice.

We emphasize the importance of the successful completion of the work of the ICTY. The Tribunal's achievement will serve as a reminder to future generations that there is no impunity for genocide, crimes against humanity or violations of the laws or customs of war, with the hope that such crimes will be prevented in future. At the same time, we are concerned that the successful completion of the Tribunal's mandate is being jeopardized by the health conditions of several detainees as well as by Tribunal staff attrition. The current situation is causing significant delays in the judicial proceedings.

Furthermore, we are deeply concerned about the possibility that years-long judicial proceedings could end without final judgements having been passed. We

once again stress the importance of fair and expeditious judicial proceedings. Therefore, we encourage the ICTY to undertake all possible measures to implement the best judicial praxis in order to avoid further delays. The victims and their families have waited long enough.

We underline the vital role of justice in the building of sustainable peace in post-conflict societies. In this regard, regional cooperation remains essential to the process of reconciliation within the country as well as the region as a whole.

Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the protocols on cooperation in the prosecution of war crimes with neighbouring countries, with the intention of intensifying cooperation in the investigation of war crimes and the protection of witnesses. Valuable results have been achieved. In March, the prosecutors of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia cooperated in the arrests of eight persons accused of carrying out killings in Srebrenica in 1995.

The cooperation of witnesses, particularly victim-witnesses, is crucial to successful war crimes prosecutions, not only before the ICTY but also before the courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Victim-witnesses often testify about very traumatic events. During their testimony, they frequently relive their traumas repeatedly. Furthermore, the same victim-witness might often testify in different processes against different persons accused of war crimes. We underline that all who deal with victim-witnesses should have a high degree of sensitivity for them and should treat them with humanity and respect for their dignity and human rights.

The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina have continued fully to cooperate with the ICTY during the reporting period, particularly in terms of allowing access to documents and archives and in witness-protection matters. We have continuously increased our level of cooperation with the ICTY and will continue to do so with the Mechanism.

Our commitment to exercise our obligation to investigate and prosecute persons responsible for war crimes remains unquestionable. Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to strengthen the national justice system at all levels so as to create the legal and political framework necessary to bring to justice persons responsible for the most serious crimes. We welcome the support of the European Union in the strengthening of the capacity of the judicial system in my country as well as in the achievement of the goals of the national strategy for war crimes processing.

The tracing of missing persons, exhumation and the exchange of information about the victims have constituted a valuable part of the cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the ICTY. After the war, Bosnia and Herzegovina had the largest number of missing persons compared with other countries in the region. Around two thirds of the estimated 30,000 missing persons have been found and identified; we still have about 8,000 missing persons.

The trilateral meeting of the Chief Prosecutors of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia held in February this year is a step in the right direction to strengthen regional cooperation in the process of the tracing and identification of missing persons. This meeting was organized with the support of the United Nations Development Programme mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we would like to thank all of those who helped the families of missing persons obtain information about their missing relatives.

We welcome the progress made in the establishment of information and documentation centres in Sarajevo and Srebrenica to provide public access to copies of public records of the archives of the ICTY and the Mechanism. The centres have a deeply symbolic significance in terms of serving as a constant reminder to future generations that violations of human rights and international humanitarian law should never be repeated. We would like to encourage other countries as well as organizations and non-governmental organizations to support the project. The legacy of the ICTY does not belong only to the countries concerned but to all of humankind as a reminder of and testimony to the fight against impunity.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that if the Council is committed to ensuring that the victims and survivors of the tragedies in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda get the justice they deserve, it must continue to provide all the support that the Tribunals and the Residual Mechanism need to enable them to complete their work and conclude this important chapter in international criminal justice, which will leave a lasting and vital legacy.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia): I would like to welcome the Presidents of the International Tribunal for the

former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Judges Meron and Joensen, as well as Prosecutors Brammertz and Jallow. We commend their work and continued efforts to ensure accountability and promote international criminal justice, and we thank them for today's briefings and their comprehensive reports.

Those reports, though they register progress, also testify to the fact that international justice can be a frustratingly slow and incomprehensible process. It is certainly so for many of the victims and their families, who are still waiting for justice to be done. It is beyond their understanding that, 22 years after the establishment of the ICTY and 20 since the end of the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, some of those with the greatest responsibility for the heinous crimes committed during those wars, including the genocide in Srebrenica, have yet to receive their long-overdue sentences.

The trials have frequently been prolonged due to the ill health of the accused. Such has been the case with Goran Hadžić, charged with war crimes against Croats and other non-Serbs in Croatia and whose trial has been suspended since October 2014 owing to his ill health. A few days ago he was again granted a provisional release on account of his health. In that particular context, the case of Slobodan Milošević comes to mind. Although he masterminded the terrible events in the former Yugoslavia and was responsible for so much human suffering, his trial lasted so long that he died before a verdict could be rendered. We encourage the Tribunal to take all appropriate and necessary steps to ensure that Goran Hadžić's trial recommences as soon as possible and is duly completed and brought to its final judicial conclusion. It is also extremely important that the judgements in the Tribunal's two other pivotal cases — those of Ratko Mladić and Radovan Karadžić — be delayed no further. We are of the opinion that the Tribunal has sufficient resources to accomplish that.

I would like to reiterate once again that in our view a speedy trial resulting in a court decision, whether a conviction or an acquittal, represents not only one of the most essential rights of the accused but an equally essential right of the victim. The trial of Vojislav Šešelj, indicted in 2003 for war crimes, crimes against humanity and making inflammatory speeches fomenting hatred, has been anything but speedy and efficient. In my statement to the Council six months ago (see S/PV.7332), I drew the Security Council's attention to the Šešelj case and the detrimental effect of the Tribunal's decision to allow his temporary release on humanitarian grounds. We therefore heartily commend Prosecutor Brammertz's efforts to revoke his provisional release and welcome the Appeals Chamber's decision of 30 March ordering the Trial Chamber to act on that immediately.

We note with displeasure, however, that the Appeals Chamber's decision has not yet been carried out; we expect the request for Šešelj's return to custody to be respected and implemented. It seems that the Tribunal has intensified its efforts in that regard, and we hope to see concrete results soon. In recent months, we have again witnessed Vojislav Šešelj's warmongering hate speeches, his public burning of the Croatian flag and his appalling mockery of victims. That toxic public display was paired with the recent incomprehensible decision to rehabilitate Šešelj's infamous ideological predecessor, a notorious war criminal in the Second World War.

The recognition of victims' suffering is an important prerequisite for reconciliation, and we share the view that reconciliation begins with the acceptance of established facts. Revisionism and the denial of crimes, including genocide, are unacceptable. The upcoming commemoration of the genocide in Srebrenica, as well as the commemoration later this year of the atrocities committed in Vukovar and elsewhere, is indeed an opportunity to send a clear message in that regard.

Croatia has used its comprehensive negotiations over its accession to the European Union (EU), now successfully crowned with Croatia's membership of the EU — we mark our second anniversary on 1 July — to fully develop its capacity for investigating war crime cases and sending them to trial. In view of the possibility of referrals by the ICTY of its proceedings, we expect candidates and potential candidates for the EU from south-eastern Europe to take advantage of the same opportunity and to improve their capacities and performance in that area.

I would like to conclude by reiterating Croatia's continuing and full support of the ICTY, despite any criticism voiced today or on previous occasions. We appreciate the Tribunal's work, which has contributed to ending impunity and advanced both the development and implementation of international criminal law and international humanitarian law, changing the landscape of international justice profoundly. We

would particularly emphasize the contribution of both the ICTY and the ICTR to international jurisprudence on sexual violence.

Croatia hopes to contribute to the fight against impunity for sexual crimes committed during conflicts through our Parliament's recent enactment of a law on the rights of victims of sexual violence. Under the law, Croatian citizens, women and men alike, who were victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence during the war in our homeland, will be entitled to financial compensation and a permanent monthly allowance, as well as the services and support they need to help them heal after their trauma and rebuild their lives.

In conclusion, although the ICTY has done much, its work is not finished yet. Thousands of victims are still waiting for justice. Justice should be served without any unnecessary delay. For our part, we will continue to support and assist the Tribunal in its efforts to complete its important work.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Serbia.

Mr. Obradović (Serbia): It is an honour and a privilege to speak to the Security Council, and to be doing it for the first time only magnifies that. Before making my statement, I would like to welcome the esteemed Presidents and Prosecutors of the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the Residual Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals, and to thank them for their semi-annual reports.

As a country with a major stake in the ICTY's proceedings, Serbia has followed the Tribunal's activities related to implementing its completion strategy and transitioning smoothly to the Residual Mechanism with great attention and interest. We have taken note of all the important elements of the report of the ICTY President (S/2015/342, annex I) and that of its Prosecutor, and we appreciate the acknowledgement of Serbia's important role in ensuring the successful completion of the Tribunal's remaining trials and appeals, as reported by the Office of the Prosecutor. The ICTY has, no doubt, made important pioneering efforts in establishing and further developing the standards of international criminal law, combating impunity and attempting to bring a sense of justice to the victims of obnoxious atrocities. That task has not been not easy.

Over the past 15 years, Serbia has made a significant contribution to those endeavours. It has executed ICTY arrest warrants, including those against its highest State and Government officials, to an extent and in numbers never requested from any other United Nations Member State either before or after the establishment of the ICTY. It has provided reams of evidence, including strictly confidential documents and testimony of its highest officials to the ICTY and judicial parties. Serbia has, moreover, achieved a level of execution of requests for assistance issued by the ICTY Trial Chambers and Prosecution that is much more expeditious than the procedure between any two European countries under bilateral treaties on mutual assistance in criminal matters. That task — the task of State cooperation — has not been easy either.

Nevertheless, the ICTY has rendered some controversial decisions. In particular, we note with dissatisfaction that in almost all major cases in which the victims have been groups or individuals of Serb ethnicity, the accused have been acquitted. Nevertheless, the Government of the Republic of Serbia has never stopped cooperating and has continued to fulfil its international obligations in good faith. I can assure the Council that this approach will be maintained and that the Government of my country will exert its best efforts to create a social milieu in which the legacy of the Tribunal will be assessed objectively. Surely, time will help too, as Mr. Brammertz suggested in his statement to the Council at its previous meeting.

In its position on war crimes perpetrated in the 1990s, Serbia is not confined solely to the process of cooperation with the ICTY. These crimes are investigated and tried in my country, as reported and welcomed by the Prosecutor. Going forward in addressing those crimes, an action plan in line with the European Union negotiating framework, on which we reported in November 2014, is in the final stage of preparation, while the Ministry of Justice has set up a working group to draft an overarching national strategy on war crimes, including many aspects of post-conflict justice. That will be done in cooperation with independent international experts, including the Office of the ICTY Prosecutor, the International Commission for Missing Persons and other relevant stakeholders. All along, the Serbian judicial organs have continued to investigate and prosecute war crimes.

So far, the Serbian War Crimes Prosecutor has indicted 175 individuals, of whom 68 have been convicted and 32 acquitted. Another 51 accused persons are currently on trial in 16 cases. In addition,

4 cases against 14 individuals are on appeal. The data on the ethnic affiliations of the accused that I have submitted to the Council for perusal and information are illustrative of my country's justice blindness in the field of ethnicity. Out of 175 accused individuals, 2 are Bosniacs, 2 ethnic Croats, one of whom is from Croatia and the other from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 22 are Albanians, of whom 17 have recently been acquitted, and 149 are ethnic Serbs. The trials in those cases are closely monitored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission in Belgrade and several domestic non-governmental organizations, and the rulings by Serbia in these cases have never been second-guessed as biased or unfair to defendants of non-Serbian nationality or ethnic origin.

However, we are also well aware that some aspects of the relevant domestic procedures need improvement. We have therefore read the Prosecutor's report carefully and thank Prosecutor Brammertz and his hard-working team for their continued assistance and monitoring activities. In that context, I would like to draw the Council's attention to a glaring and hardly comprehensible absurdity. When the ICTY Prosecutor reports to the Council that

> "Serbian judicial authorities [would] need to process a large number of war crimes cases that [would] predominantly, but not exclusively, involve Serbian nationals" (*S/2015/342, annex II, para. 52*),

one European Union Member State called for the cessation or limitation of the jurisdiction of the Serbian judiciary for war crimes. And an action to that effect has been brought before the European Parliament, contrary to the main objectives of contemporary international criminal law.

Our 2003 Law provides for Serbia's jurisdiction over the whole territory of the former Yugoslavia, regardless of the citizenship of perpetrators or victims. That provision was necessitated by the fact that, even though the territory of Serbia was not engulfed by the armed conflicts of 1991-1995, some among the refugees who sought and found shelter in Serbia did commit war crimes. The Serbian War Crimes Prosecutor has rarely had an opportunity to prosecute the citizens of other countries. There are no war crime trials in absentia in Serbia. Only those nationals of other countries found on Serbian territory and against whom no charges have been brought in their countries are tried before the Serbian War Crimes Chamber. Finally, the February 2015 report of the OSCE mission to Serbia confirms that the exercise of jurisdiction in the case of one Croatian citizen before the Serbian court is in accordance with both the customary rules of international law and with Serbian domestic law.

Yet, action continues to be taken in the European Parliament. The new argument, proffered in a letter to the Parliament dated 27 May, calls — in a pretty cavalier manner, I might add — for the primacy of the principle of the legal certainty of European citizens over the war crimes prosecution that they may be subjected to in Serbia. My Government is all for the legal certainty of those citizens; yet, in the context of certainty, they must be certain that there will be no impunity for the crimes they have committed. War crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of genocide are never under the exclusive jurisdiction of the State on whose territory they were committed. *Delicta contra juris gentium* — they are recognized as a concern of the international community as a whole.

All countries created from the former Yugoslavia have an obligation to investigate and prosecute those who committed atrocities without discrimination on the basis of the national or ethnic origin of either the perpetrator or the victim. In that context, the serious crimes of murder, inhuman acts and cruel treatment committed by Croatian Government forces against citizens of Serb ethnicity during Operation Storm in 1995 were recognized in the Judgment of the International Court of Justice of 3 February. So far, however, Croatia has had only one final conviction for the war crime of murder committed during that Operation. That sad fact should be taken into account by the European Parliament, as well as by the Council. Accordingly, further improvement of regional cooperation on war crimes issues and the full implementation of bilateral agreements, as requested in the Prosecutor's report, are a condition sine qua non for regional peace, stability and reconciliation.

With your permission, Sir, I shall now address the case of the Hague defendant Vojislav Šešelj. Serbia joins all those frustrated by the long and ineffective trial. We understand the emotions of the victims of the crimes of which defendant Šešelj, the politician, has been accused. We condemn those crimes, regret that they were committed and sympathize profoundly with the victims and their families. However, the criminal responsibility of the Serbian national has not yet been determined, and the presumption of innocence in his case must be fully respected. The Serbian

Government is concerned about many aspects of this odd case, particularly with regard to the respect for the defendant's rights.

Vojislav Šešelj surrendered to the Tribunal voluntarily in February 2003, a week after the indictment against him was publicly issued. He waited in detention for the commencement of the trial for over four years. He never made a request to the Trial Chamber for a provisional release and declared his unwillingness to accept the guarantees of the Government regarding such a procedural treatment. His trial has been characterized by many procedural dilemmas and general disorder. The accused opted for self-representation. He had an ongoing conflict with the organs of the Tribunal, which culminated in a long hunger strike, during which his life was in danger. He was convicted of contempt of court three times. Finally, he refused to run the defence case. The trial was closed on 20 March 2012, nine years after his voluntary surrender. More than three years later, he is still waiting for the trial judgement — a situation without precedent in modern case law. If such a situation appeared before a Serbian court, one can only imagine the hue and cry that would be raised in the European Court for Human Rights over the disrespect of the rights of the accused.

In November 2014, at the time of defendant Šešelj's first provisional release, which was proprio motu, for humanitarian reasons and without any specific duties assigned to the Serbian Government, the Security Council discussed the unacceptable political statements he had made. My Government does not share Vojislav Šešelj's political ideas and repudiates his statements, but it does urge the Tribunal to conclude his case. The seriousness of the accusations cannot undermine respect for the human rights of the defendant. I call on the members of the Security Council to pay attention also to the human rights aspect of this case, and not only to the unacceptable political statements made by the defendant, which are, incidentally, targeted more often than not at the democratically elected Government of Serbia and its pro-European orientation.

I would like to reiterate my country's interest in the future dialogue on questions related to the ICTY archives. Also, we reaffirm our previous humanitarian request with respect to the enforcement of sentences and the possibility that convicted persons could serve their sentences in Serbia as well, under international monitoring.

Instead of a conclusion, I take this opportunity to commend all the hard-working officials and staff of the Tribunals and the Residual Mechanism for the relentless efforts they continue to invest despite all the challenges and lack of resources they face. They can always count on the full and unstinting support of the Serbian Government.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Rwanda.

Mr. Maboneza (Rwanda): At the outset, let me congratulate you, Sir, on Malaysia's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. Let me also congratulate the delegation of Lithuania on the excellent work done during their presidency in the month of May. I thank Judges Meron and Joensen and Prosecutors Jallow and Brammetz for their respective briefings.

The world commemorated the twentieth anniversary of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda last year, in April 2014, and marked the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in November of the same year. As the Tribunal is winding down, we express our belief that the ICTR has played an important role in the fight against impunity for mass atrocities, but also produced a substantial body of jurisprudence, including definitions of the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and forms of responsibility, such as superior responsibility. Most importantly, the Tribunal established that the genocide that occurred in Rwanda was against the Tutsi as a group, and also ruled that acts of rape and sexual violence constitute genocide if committed with the intent to destroy the targeted group.

We note with satisfaction that, since the unanimous adoption of resolution 2150 (2014) of 16 April 2014 on the prevention and fight against genocide, reports on the completion strategy of the ICTR use the correct terminology, consistent with the ongoing jurisprudence of the Tribunal, which refers to the specific ethnic group that was the target of the genocide in Rwanda. Indeed, as we have said and repeated in this Chamber, the expressions "Rwandan genocide" and "genocide in Rwanda", used by many of those around this table, are unfortunately misused by deniers of all kinds to try to confuse the Council and the whole world as to which group was targeted by the genocide.

As we look forward to the conclusion of the *Butare* case by the Appeals Chamber, which was unnecessarily delayed, we note that the 93 individuals indicted for genocide were mainly the masterminds of that crime, as well as national and local leaders who were out of reach of Rwandan justice, as they were international fugitives. We regret, however, that nine fugitives are still at large and reiterate our call to Member States, especially those in our region, to collaborate in arresting all remaining genocide fugitives, as per resolution 2150 (2014).

It is worth noting that those fugitives include the tycoon Félicien Kabuga, whose son-in-law, Paulin Murayi, is financially supporting the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda, a movement that spread genocide ideology and engaged in related activities in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Given the material evidence recently unveiled by the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we hope that his name, as well as others, will soon be included on the United Nations list of sanctions, as requested by my country.

Regarding the monitoring of the four cases referred to national courts, we regret that the report under review (S/2015/340, enclosure) and the oral statements that were made this afternoon do not provide enough detail on the status of those cases. While the procedures of two cases referred to Rwanda in 2012 and 2013 are well advanced, we are extremely concerned at the delays encountered in the investigations into the two cases referred to France in 2007, which are those of Wenceslas Munyeshyaka and Laurent Bucyibaruta. We call on the French authorities to expedite the investigations and proceedings in both cases.

Rwanda has, on many occasions, expressed its view that the ICTR archives, although the property of the United Nations, should be located to Rwanda upon completion of the mandate of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. Indeed, the ICTR records constitute an integral part of Rwandan history, are vital to the preservation of the memory of the genocide and will play a critical role in preserving current and future generations from genocide denial and revisionism. We hope that all stakeholders will understand our request and act accordingly.

I will conclude by recalling that this year is the twentieth anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica. Like the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, efforts to address the genocide in Srebrenica have faced similar problems, mainly related to delayed justice and the scourge of genocide denial. Nonetheless, we commend the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the ICTR and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals for their continued efforts for justice and accountability for genocide and mass atrocities, and we hope that all legal proceedings will be completed very soon to enable the affected victims to turn the page on that dark period of their history.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7456

Security Council

Distr.: General
4 June 2015

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 7456th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 4 June 2015, at 10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 4 June 2015, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 7456th meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

"The President invited Ms. Daniela Kroslak, Darfur Integrated Operational Team Leader, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in the meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing by Ms. Kroslak.

"Members of the Council, Ms. Kroslak and representatives of participating contributing countries had an exchange of views."

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United Nations S/PV.7457

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7457th meeting
Friday, 5 June 2015, 9.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ibrahim	(Malaysia)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Omaish
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-16933 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 9.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedures, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Mr. Alexander Hug, Deputy Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Hug, who is joining today's meeting via video teleconference from Kyiv.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Feltman.

Mr. Feltman: Since the Council last met on Ukraine on 6 March (see S/PV.7400), while the situation in eastern Ukraine has remained tenuous, we have had some grounds for hope. The ceasefire continues to largely hold in most parts of the conflict zone, and the number and pace of casualties have generally slowed. Importantly, the political process aimed at full implementation of the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements, adopted on 12 February, is finally under way. I also wish to reiterate that, had it not been for the continued diplomatic efforts of Ukraine, France, Germany and the Russian Federation in the Normandy format and the support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), we would likely be faced with a more challenging situation. The full implementation of Minsk is sine qua non for leading eastern Ukraine and the country out of conflict. The continued non-implementation of various provisions of the agreement entails a dangerous limbo.

Mr. Alexander Hug, Deputy Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, will brief the Council in detail on the security situation in eastern Ukraine, including on Wednesday's hostilities. However, I would be remiss not to note the grave concern of the United Nations about the ongoing, almost daily deadly clashes, the use of heavy weaponry, the laying of minefields on both sides of the contact line, the reported continued presence of foreign mercenaries on Ukrainian soil and the reported flows of heavy weaponry into eastern Ukraine, all of which run contrary to key provisions of the Minsk package of measures.

The latest death toll since the outbreak of the conflict stands at over 6,400 people. Since the signing of the Minsk package, some additional 400 lives have been lost. Sadly, just on Wednesday, 3 June, according to the latest figures from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, an additional 28 people, including nine civilians, were killed in deadly clashes around Marinka. This is a sharp increase over the past weeks, particularly as heavy shelling elsewhere in Donetsk reportedly continued throughout yesterday. We are either looking at a return to a deepening, intractable conflict or a momentary upsurge in parts of the conflict zone. We cannot afford either scenario. The ceasefire must be fully respected and the protection of civilians a priority. I would also like to stress that all concerned should refrain from using threats of violence and military leverage to influence the political process.

The humanitarian situation also remains dire. Ukraine now ranks among the top 10 countries in terms of internally displaced persons (IDPs), with over 1.3 million IDPs. There were none just over a year ago. In the last week of May alone, 16,000 people were displaced. Similarly, nearly 870,000 Ukrainians have sought asylum, residence or other forms of legal stay in neighbouring countries; 10,000 of those were in the second half of May alone. The number of displaced will only grow if the violence continues.

Of immediate concern is the now complete lack of humanitarian access across the contact line in either direction, which has been preventing lifesaving humanitarian assistance from reaching those most in need. All parties to the conflict must immediately guarantee unimpeded access for humanitarian personnel and cargo, both by the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Government of Ukraine must remove all bureaucratic impediments to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and the 2 June decree issued by the de facto authorities in Donetsk that prohibits international NGOs from operating in non-Government controlled Donetsk must be immediately revoked.

Since this crisis began, we have seen the Council convene dozens of times. Security Council members have repeatedly raised concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation. Yet the $316-million 2015 humanitarian response plan to assist victims of this conflict faces a shortfall of $221 million. The Secretary-General calls on Member States to urgently translate their concern into action and to fully fund the humanitarian response. This will ensure that the capacity and resources are in place to reach those in desperate need the moment that access is restored.

On the political-diplomatic front, we are most encouraged by the continued and critical work in the Normandy format, with the next political director-level meeting scheduled for 10 June in Paris, by the diligent efforts of the Trilateral Contact Group, and by the commencement of the four working groups on political, security, humanitarian and economic issues. In our view, these three interconnected mechanisms are all equally important pieces of the political and diplomatic process, and we are heartened to see that the international community is fully committed to these efforts.

With regard to the working groups specifically, we understand that, although they have not been without challenges, each group has met at least twice and that the atmosphere has mainly been constructive. The political working group has, we understand, focused its energies on the modalities of local elections, which also includes finding common ground on the special status law. Equally important efforts to fmd political solutions to some of the most pressing economic, humanitarian and security questions are also under way.

From 7 to 10 May, the Secretary-General visited Poland, Ukraine and Russia. During his visits, he held a number of constructive meetings with regard to the conflict in Ukraine, including with Presidents Poroshenko and Putin. Although they had varying views on the conflict in the east, both Presidents reassured the Secretary-General of their continued commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. It was evident that, although the road ahead would be long and arduous, the full implementation of the Minsk agreements is possible if all concerned fulfil their obligations and engage in good faith.

The Secretary-General will continue his good offices role on Ukraine, and remains open to considering how best to further support the OSCE, as well as the implementation of the Minsk agreements more broadly. The critical work of the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, evinced by its latest report of 1 June, as well as of the humanitarian and development actors on the ground, remain priority areas for our Organization.

The package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements, including the reinstatement of full control of the State border by the Government of Ukraine, has a deadline. That deadline is less than six months away. As we have stated on a number of occasions, neither Ukraine nor the region nor the international community can afford to have this process fail. Above all, we cannot forget the tremendous human cost of the conflict, which can only begin to be addressed through respect of the ceasefire and fulfilment of the political, economic, social, humanitarian and human rights provisions of Minsk.

I would like to close by reiterating the United Nations unwavering support to Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. The people of Ukraine deserve nothing less.

The President: I thank Mr. Feltman for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Hug.

Mr. Hug: At the outset, I would like to thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Ukraine. On 27 February (see S/PV.7395), Ambassador Apakan gave the Council the most recent update on behalf of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine in the aftermath of the signing of the Minsk package of measures.

Today, I am reporting a significant deterioration of the security situation in Ukraine. The violence witnessed in and around the town of Marinka, close to the line of contact, constitutes a new worrying development in the conflict in eastern Ukraine. After the signature of the Minsk package of measures, large parts of the conflict region had initially remained quiet for months. This was particularly true for the Luhansk region. However, throughout all this period, fighting has continued in some hot spots, such as in the surroundings of the destroyed airport of the city of Donetsk, and in the area of the city of Mariupol around the village of Shyrokyne.

The OSCE Mission, during that period, continuously observed a pattern of heavy fighting

in these two locations, with occasional flare-ups in other places. In the beginning of May, the security situation started to deteriorate further. Towns in the Donetsk region that had been quiet for months, such as Horlivka and Hranitne, saw increased violence, and again there were civilian casualties, mostly due to the indiscriminate use of heavy weapons. Significantly, the violence has also spread to the Luhansk region, with villages immediately north of Luhansk city — namely, Shchastia and Stanytsia Luhanska — and others further north-west along the contact line now witnessing regular shelling and small-arms fire engagements.

The level of violence seen at Marinka in this context does not necessarily represent a further intensification of violence. The Mission has, after all, witnessed hundreds of shells fall in and around Donetsk airport, fired by both sides for many days. Marinka instead seems to represent a possible new development — a refocusing of weaponry and personnel. Before, violence was concentrated north and north-west of Donetsk city, with the economically and strategically important town of Avdiivka to the north the apparent focus. Marinka does not necessarily mean that this objective has changed, but perhaps the means have.

Immediately following the signing of the Minsk package, the Mission witnessed the withdrawal of some heavy weapons from the contact line. It visited so-called heavy weapons holding areas where all sides stored such weapons. Over time, however, the Mission has increasingly noted irregularities. Weapons previously recorded are now often missing. In the meantime, the Mission has noted the movement and presence of heavy weapons — not to mention the obvious use of such weapons — in areas where they are prohibited by the Minsk arrangements.

In many cases, the Mission has also been prevented from accessing heavy weapons holding areas. It has also been denied entry to specific areas, notably along the Russian-Ukrainian international border. The Mission's unmanned aerial vehicles have been jammed on a regular basis, causing interference in the control of those vehicles and their video feed. Our monitors have also faced threats and intimidation and have even been fired upon, all of which constitutes efforts to prevent the Mission from monitoring adherence to the Minsk package, in particular the provision relating to the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the contact line.

Despite these obstacles — and mostly because of the bravery of dedicated and professional monitors on the ground — the Mission has been able to effectively monitor the situation on the ground. On the basis of extensive first-hand evidence of violations gathered by our 375 monitors on the ground in Donbas and our unarmed aerial vehicles in the sky, I can report with confidence on the situation there.

Our assessment from the ground is that tension levels have increased and that ceasefire violations are becoming more frequent and more severe. In particular, the reintroduction of Grad rockets and other multiple-launch rocket systems is cause for added concern. Although negotiations are always necessary, these developments — and in particular the events in Marinka — serve as a stark reminder for all sides of the need to resolve their difference at the negotiation table.

The Minsk agreements form an integrated whole and prescribe a ceasefire and a political process towards the normalization of the situation. They remain the only available framework for peace. In that context, the process of implementation of these agreements falls within the remit of the Trilateral Contact Group, chaired by Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, with whom we cooperate very closely. The Mission coordinates the working group on security of the Trilateral Contact Group, one of the working groups established under measure 13 of the Minsk package. That working group has, to date, held three meetings, the most recent of which was held on 2 June, just before the events around Marinka. The working group has the task of increasing security in the conflict zone. This now includes a plan to withdraw tanks and certain weapons with a calibre smaller than 100 millimetres and a plan to de-escalate the situation around one of the main hotspots, in the village of Shyrokyne, to the east of Mariupol.

Initially, issues of format had a negative impact on the meetings of the working group. However, the most recent meeting, held on 2 June, proved to be constructive, and a material discussion on issues was achieved between the sides. Despite the fact that some issues remain open, that process of discussion and of mutual engagement regarding the situation on the ground must continue.

A role in the peace process is also played by the joint centre for control and coordination. This structure consists of military representatives from Ukraine and the Russian Federation and operates inside the conflict zone. The Mission closely monitors the work of this structure and must report that the joint centre still does not operate jointly. The sides also maintain

separate ceasefire violation logs, one by the Ukrainian armed forces and one by the Russian Federation armed forces representation to the joint centre, suggesting a persisting structural split in their work. If the sides would resolve to work jointly, the joint centre could play an important role in avoiding or stopping ceasefire violations towards a full implementation of the Minsk documents.

The humanitarian situation in the conflict zone continues to be a matter of much concern. As reported by the Government of Ukraine, there are now at least 1.3 million internally displaced persons in Ukraine, which is symptomatic of how the conflict is affecting the civilian population in Donbas. The majority of those are elderly people, women and children, who are particularly exposed to the consequences of the conflict. Civilians continue to pay an unacceptable price. They are killed and wounded, as both sides continue to place military positions in and around civilian infrastructure. Their property and livelihoods have been destroyed. The Mission has also noted the temporary closure of Ukraine's biggest coke and chemical plant in Avdiivka due to targeted and sustained shelling.

There is also a significant amount of landmines and unexploded ordnance in conflict-affected areas, which poses a major threat to the lives of civilians and to recovery efforts. Ongoing hostilities have had an impact on residential areas and basic services infrastructure, including gas pipelines and the water supply, which has severely limited access to safe drinking water for civilians. The latter is of particular concern with the summer months approaching.

Compounding the difficult situation facing civilians is a permit system in operation all along the contact line. The delivery of humanitarian aid and medical supplies and normal commerce have been severely affected, resulting in a worsening of the living conditions of people living in the conflict zone. With access across the contact line, particularly in the Luhansk region, almost at a standstill, people-to-people contact has been hugely disrupted, resulting in divided communities and even families.

The Mission will not lose sight of these aspects of the conflict and is working, as mandated, on related tasks throughout Ukraine. We continue to facilitate humanitarian assistance where possible and within the remit of our mandate. In doing so, we closely cooperate with the United Nations and its agencies. We seek to be helpful to the population through our broad and robust presence on the ground. We work on the facilitation of localized ceasefires and infrastructure repairs across the contact line. Such efforts, combined with our engagement on human rights issues, gender and dialogue facilitation, will help to consolidate the basis on which the implementation of the political part of the Minsk agreements is built.

Allow me to reiterate that developments around Marinka are worrying, suggesting that the military track has not been abandoned in favour of the political one. Those events underline the need to break the cycle of violence now before further escalation takes place.

We urgently call on all sides to return to the negotiating table and make use of the negotiation framework set up in the context of the Trilateral Contact Group. The Mission will continue to implement its mandate with impartiality and in close cooperation with all sides, in the context of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. We stand ready to assist in the implementation of the Minsk agreements and thereby contribute to the restoration of peace.

The President: I thank Mr. Hug for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Ms. Murmokaitė (Lithuania): Let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting at short notice. I also thank Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman and Alexander Hug, Deputy Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, for their assessments of and briefings on the reality on the ground in Donbas, eastern Ukraine.

When in February Russian-backed forces occupied Debaltseve in violation of existing ceasefire agreements, many worried that that violation would not be the last and that, just like the September 2014 Minsk agreements, the February 2015 agreement was also signed only to be broken. The only question was when.

For some time now, the OSCE Mission has been reporting violations of the Minsk agreements and an increased movement of heavy weaponry in the territories held by the illegal militants. For example, the 3 June OSCE Mission report states that the Mission observed the movement of a large amount of heavy weapons in areas controlled by the so-called Donetsk People's Republic — generally in a westerly direction towards the contact line — close to Marinka, preceding

and during the fighting. Between 10.30 p.m. on 2 June and 5.30 a.m. on 3 June, the Mission — positioned in the Tekstilshchik area of Donetsk city, controlled by the so-called Donetsk People's Republic — made a number of observations. It observed, inter alia, eight tracked armoured vehicles moving west, four of which were main battle tanks, at 10.30 p.m.; four main battle tanks at 11.03 p.m.; a military-type truck moving west, towing a 122-millimetre artillery piece, at 11.45 p.m.; two T-64 battle tanks moving west at 4.30 a.m.; and a column of one infantry fighting vehicle, three military trucks — one carrying an ZU-23-2 anti-aircraft gun — and two T-72 main battle tanks moving west at 4.50 a.m. Such reports have been increasingly frequent in the last few days.

The military attack against the Ukrainian positions in Marinka and Krasnogorivka and the use of multiple rocket launcher systems against Pisky, Nevelske and Vodiane in the pre-dawn hours of 3 June are a most serious blow to the increasingly fragile status quo of the implementation of the Minsk agreements. Under attack, the Ukrainian military has had no choice but to inform the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission that in order to defend themselves they would need to move weapons toward the line of contact to respond to these attacks by Russian-separatist forces.

Notably, the Special Monitoring Mission made several attempts to contact the leaders of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic, including the self-proclaimed Prime Minister, Parliamentary Speaker, Minister of Defence and Chief of the General Staff, in order to facilitate a cessation to the fighting around Marinka. None of the calls were taken. According to the Mission staff, all were either unavailable or did not wish to speak. This is not how anyone caring for a fragile ceasefire would behave. On the contrary, such behaviour indicates a clear intent to go on the offensive in breach of all existing agreements. Notably, according to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, last week, outgoing automatic grenade launcher fire from within the city was heard, indicating that the so-called Donetsk People's Republic is using residential areas to launch their attacks, posing deliberate and grave risks to the local population.

Furthermore, the self-proclaimed leaders of the illegal armed groups do not hide their intention to seek more territory. Just recently the self-proclaimed militant boss Zakharchenko told journalists: "Slaviansk, Konstantynivka, Krasnoarmiysk are towns of the Donetsk People's Republic", indicating intent to take them by force. Little does it matter to him and his peers that they have no legitimate claim whatsoever on the sovereign territory of the State of Ukraine and its people, to which and to whom he and his peers, supported and armed by Russia, have done and continue to do incalculable damage.

The Council has put its weight behind the Minsk agreements, unequivocally demanding their implementation in resolution 2202 (2015). Among other things, these agreements demanded full withdrawal of heavy weapons, foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine, called for safe, free and unrestricted access for the monitors of the Special Monitoring Mission in all parts of eastern Ukraine, and stressed the release of all hostages. However, all points of the Minsk agreements have been ignored or wilfully breached by the proxy militants.

Persistent flows of foreign fighters and weapons from the Russian Federation, as noted in the latest report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, continue to fuel the conflict. Ukraine's eastern borders remain open to the supply of arms and heavy weapons. Russian soldiers have been captured on Ukrainian soil. Russian soldiers continue to die anonymously on the Ukrainian soil. Thanks to arms supplies, the illegal militants have a larger and better equipped military force than quite a few European States and NATO members; it is probably the largest illegal army ever. The comings and goings across the border of individuals in military uniforms without insignia, and most recently with the insignia of the armed forces of the Russian Federation, as reported by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission.

OSCE monitors can observe less than 1 per cent of the conflict border. If this is happening before their eyes, it is quite easy to guess what is happening in places that they cannot observe, where there are no international monitors. OSCE observers continue to be intimidated and, as noted earlier, threatened and systematically denied access by the illegal Russian militant proxies; OSCE unmanned aerial vehicles are jammed. The training, arming and financing of militants continues unimpeded. Heavy weapons have not been completely withdrawn, have been moved around a great deal and are being returned to the frontline. Ukrainian coal is being smuggled out of the country and into Russia in broad daylight while Ukraine itself suffers from a coal

shortage. The so-called humanitarian convoys continue their comings and goings as if eastern Ukraine were Russia's own backyard. Prisoner exchanges are stalling. The former United Nations peacekeeper, Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko, remains illegally imprisoned. Oleg Sentsov and other Ukrainian citizens are being illegally detained in Russia.

We support the efforts of the United Nations, the OSCE and other international actors aimed at finding solutions to this conflict, including through the strengthened good offices of the Secretary-General. We call on the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts and act fast, before the conflict claims more lives and flares up once again. We also support the idea of strengthening the United Nations presence on the ground, including through the setting up of a United Nations peace support office.

And yet today we reiterate our strong support for the independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, with Crimea as an integral part. And yet today, because of a Russian-supported asymmetrical war accompanied by an aggressive propaganda campaign, Crimea remains occupied and Ukraine finds itself among the top 10 countries in terms of the number of internally displaced persons. The conflict has claimed some 6,500 lives, while many more — including the children of eastern Ukraine — are wounded or displaced, living in subhuman conditions and constant fear.

Today, as tensions risk to explode once again into open military conflict, sadly, Russia chooses once again to blame the victim, Ukraine, for defending itself, while protecting and arming the illegal militants. We have said time and again that it is up to Russia to rein in the illegal militants and put an end to this bloody conflict which it started with the occupation of Crimea over a year ago. For its part, Ukraine has done and continues to do everything within its power to uphold the fragile ceasefire agreement. But like any country under attack, Ukraine has the right and the duty before its citizens to defend itself in the face of aggression. No one can take that right away.

As the illegal militants and Russian proxies continue their blatant attempts to change facts on the ground, we must stand firm with the people of Ukraine and the United Nations Charter in condemning such criminal efforts. We call on all the parties to respect all existing agreements and the ceasefire and redouble their efforts to move forward in the Trilateral Contact Group.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have been discussing the situation in Ukraine since February 2014. At that time, there was an agreement between the President and the opposition. If that agreement had been implemented, Kyiv would have implemented constitutional reform by the end of last year and we would have observed a gradual normalization of and democratic development in Ukraine. Instead, a different logic has been in place, supported by people who want to see their political preferences for the future of Ukraine and its entire population prevail. This is the root of a tragic situation that has gone on for too long. We need to put an end to it. That is why the Minsk agreements exist.

We wish to express our gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman, and the Deputy Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Mr. Alexander Hug, for their briefings. We share the great concern at the resurgence of military activity in Donbas. We need to take measures to stabilize the situation. In this regard, we welcome the efforts of the OSCE and the Joint Centre for Control and Coordination.

The package of measures for implementing the Minsk agreements adopted on 12 February gives a concise and clear road map for settling the Ukrainian crisis. The Security Council unanimously supported the document in resolution 2202 (2015), assuming its part of political responsibility for settling the situation in Ukraine. Therefore, here in the Security Council, we need to deal with the causes of the ongoing escalation.

Almost four months have gone by since 12 February, yet what has been done to implement the package of measures? Pursuant to paragraph 4, on the first day after the withdrawal of heavy weapons, a dialogue should have begun on the modalities for conducting local elections in line with Ukrainian legislation and laws on the special status of Donbas, which were adopted back in the autumn of 2014. The Supreme Council of Ukraine — the Verkhovna Rada — was required only to adopt a law on this territory with respect to its special status. Instead, however, the Ukrainian parliament has introduced amendments that were not agreed to by Donetsk and Luhansk and which were not acceptable to them, and the territory itself was declared to be

occupied, which completely subverted the agreements reached in Minsk. The amendments simply overlooked the adoption of the special status and did not provide for local elections.

Kyiv has begun to toughen its rhetoric, saying that elections could only take place once the south-east of Ukraine was under its full control. Over all this time, Kyiv has refused to have direct dialogue with the representatives of Dombas, despite provisions for such dialogue in paragraphs 4, 9, 11 and 12 of the package of measures. This is one of the obvious reasons why it has been so difficult to start negotiations in the Trilateral Contact Group and its subgroups.

In violation of paragraph 5 of the package of measures, Kyiv has also not adopted the amnesty law which would prohibit any punishment for persons involved in the activities taking place in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Moreover, the Ukrainian leadership has repeatedly stated publicly that it does not intend to comply with that provision.

One of the central elements in the implementation package is instituting constitutional reforms by the end of the year. The parameters of those reforms were outlined in Minsk with the active participation of the leaders of the Normandy quartet. Paragraph 11 states in black and white that decentralization must be implemented while taking into account the particularities of specific districts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as agreed on with the representatives of those districts. The package includes provisions on the right to linguistic self-determination, the creation of people's militias by decision of local councils, the expansion of local Governments' powers to appoint chief prosecutors and judges, and the conclusion of agreements with Kyiv in various areas, as well as the implementation of cross-border cooperation with Russia.

Kyiv finally established a constitutional commission on 3 March that included foreign experts but not a single representative of Donetsk and Luhansk, whose proposals for constitutional reform were simply ignored. Kyiv's refusal to comply with the humanitarian and socioeconomic provisions of the package of measures presents the population of Donbas with serious challenges. The noose of the economic blockade around Donetsk and Luhansk is being drawn tighter and tighter. The Kyiv officials do not hide the fact that those restrictive measures are purely punitive, saying that the people of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics are being punished for their support of the volunteers. People have been cut off from social benefits and access to food and medicines is difficult, since commercial transport is not being allowed through. Kyiv has not reacted to the remonstrations of international humanitarian and human-rights workers regarding the fact that it is children and the elderly, the most vulnerable, who suffer.

Thanks to humanitarian assistance from Russia, the people of Donbas are surviving in a literal sense. We have already sent 28 convoys with more than 36,000 tons of humanitarian deliveries in food, daily necessities and medicines. The Ukrainian border guards and customs officers finally began recently to participate in monitoring them, something we have invited them to do from the start. It is encouraging that Switzerland recently contributed by sending a significant delivery of reagents for purifying drinking water. But the basic problem of difficult access for humanitarian assistance remains, thanks to Kyiv's bureaucratic obstacles. In addition to all this, the response to appeals for financing is at only 21 per cent.

The Ukrainian Government has also been unable or unwilling to bring all the punitive battalions under its control, in accordance with paragraph 10 of the Minsk agreement. They continue to wreak havoc. For example, during the truce the Aydar troops in the Luhansk region switched to extorting and abusing civilians, including the elderly, trying to cross the line of contact on foot in order to get cash or buy food. After the Minsk agreement was reached on 12 February, a fair amount was done to implement important provisions on removing heavy weaponry, yet attacks on civilian towns and villages east of the boundary line nonetheless continued almost daily, terrorizing the local population.

I will cite just a few examples. On 28 May, three people, including an 11-year-old girl and her father, died in shelling in Horlivka, and many of the town's residents were injured. On 3 June, a massive bombardment of Donetsk killed at least six civilians died and wounded more than 90, besides which there was firing from the town of Marinka, as has been mentioned today, which appears to have provoked the latest escalation of military action. On 4 June, when Telmanovo was attacked by Ukrainian forces, shells hit a playground, killing a year-old infant.

Accusations have been levelled at the militias, but we can only ask ourselves why all we hear in statements from Kyiv is about military casualties, while there are reports from Donetsk and Luhansk of

the death of civilians and the destruction of civilian infrastructure — hospitals, schools, kindergartens and houses. In that regard, we ask that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission not simply focus on the violations of the ceasefire agreement and on determining who violated it, but also describe clearly what the targets of those attacks were and whether their victims were civilians or military units firing on residential areas. We must have a clear picture of what is happening in Donbas and who is committing violations not just of the Minsk agreement but also of the norms of international humanitarian law.

Against that background, it is surprising to see the indifference of our Western partners, who are usually so fond of pontificating about humanitarian issues. Furthermore, there is no end to the shipments of military supplies, including armoured vehicles, along with the hundreds of instructors sent to train the Ukrainian forces. There have been numerous reports of sightings near Donbas of foreign mercenaries and private military companies. Is that not a direct encouragement to a resumption of hostilities, not to mention a clear violation of paragraph 10, which provides for the withdrawal of foreign armed forces, military equipment and mercenaries from Ukrainian territory?

For all practical purposes, it is no secret that Kyiv has used the Minsk truce to rebuild and regroup its forces, which is why the latest outbreak of hostilities, while seriously worrying, is hardly surprising. However, we should not ignore the fact that it occurred after a series of very positive meetings between the Trilateral Contact Group and its working groups, most recently in Minsk on 2 June. And although they have yet to reach a final agreement, there has been progress on every issue under discussion, including on such complex subjects as the demilitarization of Shirokino and including mortars with a calibre under 100 millimetres on the list of excluded weapons.

Definite progress has been made on the question of starting direct consultations between Kyiv and Luhansk and Donetsk on preparing for the holding of local elections. That raises the suspicion that it is precisely this positive news that is linked to the armed provocations being conducted against cities in Donbas. Perhaps Kyiv, particularly the so-called war party, has understood that it cannot continue to sabotage the implementation package forever. Even the capitals that are most loyal to Kyiv have begun to betray signs of irritation, saying that the Kyiv authorities have overstepped the bounds of decency in violating or simply ignoring the Minsk agreement. And military action is the most reliable diversionary manoeuvre, since one can blame anything on the war.

This is a critical moment. If we continue to allow Kyiv to drag its feet in taking what are absolutely essential political steps regarding Donbas, the situation may again spiral out of control, with unpredictable consequences. We urge the members of the Council with influence over the Kyiv authorities to make every effort to ensure that this does not occur.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman and Mr. Alexander Hug, Deputy Chief Monitor of the Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), for their briefings.

The latest developments on the ground are worrying. I refer of course to the resumption of fighting on Wednesday in Marinka, west of Donetsk, and of the increase in incidents at numerous points on the front line. According to the information we have, the attack was launched by separatist troops in violation of the commitments made in Minsk on 12 February. We firmly condemn all violations of the ceasefire declared in February and urge the parties to respect their commitments under the Minsk agreement's implementation package.

It is clear, however, that the fighting, which is at a level of intensity not seen since February and the attack on Debaltseve, comes primarily from limited forces in a sector that has already been the scene of several violations of the ceasefire, to our regret. As far as we know, the separatist forces amount to a half-battalion supported by armoured elements and they have been halted. The situation, however, presents a number of features that call for extreme vigilance, particularly the concentration of heavy weapons that violate the Minsk agreement, which must be stopped immediately. Similarly, the presence among the separatists of many foreign fighters who are radicalized, bellicose and undisciplined shows that Moscow must do more, and do better, to control the actions of the separatists and mercenaries.

The deterioration of the situation on the ground should not detract from the overall situation in Ukraine. Despite the attack, the Minsk process is ongoing

and there are true signs of hope. From the security perspective, the Minsk process has launched a positive momentum, even if it has been only unevenly applied to date. The average number of victims per day has dropped significantly since the adoption of the Minsk package on 12 February. More than 2,500 Ukrainian soldiers have been released.

Furthermore, at the second level of the process, there have recently been tenuous but encouraging developments in the political process. In particular, the working groups proposed by Ms. Tagliavini in her statement before the Council three months ago (see S/PV.7400) have been established and have already met. Discussions are still getting off the ground. They have been delayed by numerous signs of distrust and sensitivity on both sides. We note that in the groups, substantial and productive debates have achieved tangible progress on organizing elections in the separatist zone. In particular, a voting method for the separatist zone has been accepted by all, and that is a positive sign that touches on one of the key aspects of the crisis.

Similarly, the Trilateral Contact Group, the cornerstone of the implementation of the Minsk agreements, within which the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and plays a crucial role pursuant to resolution 2202 (2015), has met on several occasions. In that regard, we regret the change of heart of the Russian party which, in leaving the discussion table with great fanfare on Tuesday, is attempting to impose the separatists as the sole Ukrainian interlocutors in that forum. We remind Russia, a member of the Trilateral Contact Group and, more than any other party, subject to the provisions of resolution 2202 (2015), that it cannot shirk its obligations. The conflict in Ukraine is not a domestic crisis in which Russia can simply play the role of well-meaning mediator between two camps. Everyone knows the role that it has played in the crisis from the start, and Russia has been paying the consequences since then.

We are at a moment of truth in the Ukrainian crisis. The future of the Trilateral Contact Group is at stake and we cannot allow that crucial part of the diplomatic framework, which was put together so painstakingly, to be simply withdrawn and disqualified, particularly as it was endorsed by the Council in resolution 2202 (2015). More broadly, we must do all we can to maintain the momentum and methodology that we have used up til now. Our priority must be the full implementation of both the security and political aspects of the Minsk package, which must enter into force simultaneously before the end of the year. Respect for the timeframe established in Minsk is crucial and in our opinion it is unacceptable that it be allowed to slide. The timeframe is ambitious, but the Minsk process is the only possible means to avoid a resumption of violence from which no one would benefit.

A Normandy format follow-up meeting of political experts will take place in Paris on 10 June. We call on Russia to stop trying to extricate itself from the negotiating process and to exercise its responsibility over the separatists. It is, moreover, important to stress to the Kyiv authorities that they must begin a real dialogue with the separatists in order to organize local elections in full respect for the Minsk timeframe, and to implement the decentralization of Ukraine. When proposals made by the separatists are unacceptable to Ukraine, it must respond with its own so that the negotiations can move forward.

At this crucial moment in the implementation of the Minsk process, our commitment is more important than ever. The commitment of France is unwavering. In the context of the Normandy format, France and Germany will continue to bring pressure to bear on the parties to ensure that the OSCE enjoys the freedom of movement it requires to perform the tasks entrusted to it under the Minsk agreements, particularly in terms of monitoring the ceasefire and the withdrawal of weapons.

Finally, we recall our commitment to the sovereignty, independence and territorial independence of Ukraine within its international recognized borders.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I thank you, Sir, for organizing today's meeting to speak to the recent developments in eastern Ukraine. join others in thanking our briefers, Under Secretary-General Feltman and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Deputy Chief Monitor Hug, for providing the Council and the international community with the facts underlining the escalation in violence, which are critical in a conflict where some continue to try to obscure the truth.

On 3 June, combined Russian-separatist forces launched multiple, coordinated attacks west of the Minsk line of contact in Donetsk. The attacks were concentrated on the towns of Marinka and Krasnohorivka. The Russian Federation and its

separatist allies have offered multiple, often conflicting explanations for those attacks. In some instances, Russia and the separatists have blamed Ukraine for inciting the attacks. For example, a Russian presidential spokesman attributed the violations of the ceasefire to the "provocative actions of the Ukrainian armed forces", claiming that "the Ukrainian side has repeatedly made similar efforts to escalate tensions against the backdrop of international operations".

Similarly, the so-called Defence Minister of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic blamed Ukraine for provocations and what he called a breach of the Minsk agreements that led to the fighting. Exactly what the so-called provocations are was never explained. This set of arguments has been undermined by some of the separatists themselves, who seem to have forgotten to run their tweets and their blog posts by Moscow. During the attacks, one tweeted: "Marinka is ours", posting a photograph of armed soldiers atop a tank flying the separatist flag. A post on a separatist website said: "As a result of a massive attack by armed forces of the Donetsk People's Republic, Marinka has been liberated".

In other instances, Russia has argued that the attacks were justified because the areas that are actually part of the separatist-controlled territory under the Minsk agreements are these areas. They are not. That was the case that Russia made about Marinka and Krasnohorivka yesterday at a meeting of the OSCE. We have seen this tactic before when combined Russian-separatist forces encircled and attacked Debaltseve immediately after signing the package of measures at Minsk on 12 February. As separatist commander Eduard Basurin told Reuters on 15 February:

> "Of course we can open fire on Debaltseve. The territory is internal — ours. And internal is internal. But along the line of confrontation there is no shooting".

The problem with this line of argument is quite simply that it is false. At no point did the Minsk agreements recognize Marinka and Krasnohorivka as separatist-controlled territory, nor did they grant the separatists control over Debaltseve or other areas that combined Russian-separatist forces have seized or tried to seize. Yet, for Russia and the separatists, it seems the contact line can shift to include the territories that they feel they deserve. The Kyiv-born surrealist master Mikhail Bulgakov put this problem a different way: "The tongue can conceal the truth, but the eyes never." In this case, the objective eyes in eastern Ukraine belong to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, and what it tells us is that on the evening of 2 June and in the early morning of 3 June, the Mission

> "observed the movement of a large amount of heavy weapons in areas controlled by the Donetsk People's Republic, generally in a westerly direction towards the contact line, close to Marinka, preceding and during the fighting".

To repeat, according to the Special Monitoring Mission, heavy weapons from the Russian-backed separatist side moved westward preceding as well as during the fighting. The Mission tried to contact high-ranking Donetsk People's Republic personnel over an hour-and-a-half period on the morning of 3 June but reported: "Either they were unavailable or did not wish to speak to the SMM".

The eyes do not conceal the truth, and the truth here is that the recent violence was rooted in a combined Russian-separatist assault. Those and other joint attacks by Russian-separatist forces have deadly consequences. At least five Ukrainian soldiers were killed and 38 wounded in the assault on the towns. The number of casualties is surely higher, but we do not, unfortunately, have reliable reports from the separatist side. That is because, as the United Nations human rights monitoring unit noted in its report of 15 May, independent media have been prosecuted, threatened and otherwise muzzled in separatist-controlled territory.

We also do not know how many Russian soldiers were killed in recent attacks, or in any of their operations in eastern Ukraine for that matter. Russia continues, despite incidents such as the recent capture of two special operations Russian soldiers in Shchastya last month, to deny any military involvement in eastern Ukraine. And just last week President Putin signed a decree classifying any death of Russian soldiers in "special operations" in peacetime a State secret — a policy which previously was limited to wartime only. Not content with denying their military service in life, Russia now denies their loved ones respect and closure, not to mention social services, for their service in death. It denies the Russian people knowledge to which they are entitled of a conflict their Government has been fuelling with weapons, training and soldiers. No matter what is one's opinion of the open secret that is Russia's military involvement in eastern Ukraine and occupied Crimea, the dignified recognition of one's dead should have primacy.

Of course, suffering is hardly limited to those involved in the fighting. Civilians living near and along the front lines continue to endure profound hardship. Approximately 1.3 million Ukrainians have been displaced by the fighting. Small children on the front lines have become used to going to school and sleeping in basements. Families live underground for months at a time. The elderly and disabled are trapped, with little access to vital medicines and other forms of assistance. A health professional working in Debaltseve said,

> "I have met elderly people who say that they would just like to die. They do not have depression; they just do not want to be 80 years old and living in a basement."

By now, the international community is quite familiar with Russia's playbook when it comes to efforts to occupy the territory of its sovereign neighbours, as it did it Crimea and before that in Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The consensus here and in the international community remains that Minsk's implementation is the only viable way out of this deadly conflict.

The Ukrainian Government has made good-faith efforts to honour that consensus, notwithstanding the seemingly endless violations by Russia and the separatists, and to deliver on the commitments made at Minsk. Ukraine is holding direct dialogue with the separatists — a bitter pill to swallow, but one that they have swallowed for the sake of peace and for the sake of the implementation of the Minsk agreements.

At the same time, Ukraine has undertaken critical efforts, with the participation of Ukrainian civil society, to address pervasive problems that it inherited from its predecessors, like widespread corruption, as well as to pursue crucial reforms such as decentralization. Ukraine cooperates with the international monitors and bodies and has committed to addressing identified areas of concern. The United States will continue to raise tough issues and those areas of concern, including some raised here today by the briefers, with the Government of Ukraine, and we will support the Government and the Ukrainian people as they continue their efforts towards meaningful reform.

Yet Russia — and the separatists that it trains, arms and fights alongside and with whom it shares command-and-control systems in eastern Ukraine — continues to ignore the consensus. Flouting the commitments it made at Minsk, it goes right on applying its playbook in new territories, as though the Council and the world are too blind or too easily deceived to notice. We must not let ourselves be deceived. The consequences of Russia's contempt for Minsk and the rules undergirding our international peace and security are too great both for the integrity of the international system and for the rights and welfare of the Ukrainian people.

We cannot fail to see and fail to act. We must not stop applying pressure until Ukrainians get the stable democracy, territorial integrity and sovereignty they yearn for and deserve.

Mr. Omaish (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman and Alexander Hug, Deputy Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, for their exhaustive briefings this morning.

The relative improvement of the security situation in eastern Ukraine over the past two months has had a positive effect between the parties at the political level, despite the fact that the progress achieved has been slow and limited. Nevertheless, it is our conviction that halting stabilization efforts would be inappropriate. We therefore will continue to promote stability throughout Ukrainian territory through strengthening respect for the ceasefire agreement, limiting the conflict and preventing its spread to other regions. The Security Council and the international community must therefore provide every type of support to the parties and help them overcome all obstacles and difficulties in order to implement the peace agreements reached between them.

Jordan expresses its concern over the continuing violations of the ceasefire between the Ukrainian Government and the separatists, as well as the increased number of violations in recent days, together with the increase in the degree of violence in some parts of eastern Ukraine, particularly in the region of Donetsk and neighbouring towns. The continuing military confrontations and provocative acts and their expansion will only further complicate the situation and nullify the peace agreements reached between the parties. That will have an impact on all of the outstanding issues between the parties and worsen the economic, social and humanitarian situation even further. Such a situation will threaten the security and stability of the entire region.

Jordan invites all parties to assume their responsibilities and to emphasize constructive and direct dialogue, as well as positive discussions among them under the Normandy format, in order to reach a peaceful settlement of the crisis. We reiterate the fact that the only solution to the crisis depends on full respect by all parties — particularly the separatists — of the Minsk agreements on the ceasefire, as well as of resolution 2202 (2015). Those agreements and all of their provisions must be implemented globally without exception, particularly with regard to halting the illicit transfer of heavy weaponry and to its full withdrawal, together with the withdrawal of foreign fighters from eastern Ukraine.

Jordan welcomes the recent meeting held by the Trilateral Contact Group working group. It is a positive step forward, and it requires that all parties continue to hold such meetings regularly, on the basis of the Minsk agreements. Achieving a diplomatic solution and promoting common language and points of agreement among the parties on certain areas of some agreements are essential and vital to reach a lasting peace that meets the ambitions and requirements of the parties and the stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Jordan appreciates all of the efforts carried out by the OSCE in eastern Ukraine and reiterates that it has a crucial role in monitoring borders and the ceasefire, in addition to facilitating humanitarian access. We call upon all parties to facilitate the work of that organization and allow it to have access to all affected regions in order to ensure the provision of basic services to citizens. It is important that citizens, and refugees in particular, avoid involvement in political diversions or confrontations. They must be provided with the social and humanitarian services necessary for daily subsistence.

We pay tribute to the important role of the OSCE in preparing local elections, and we hope that these elections will soon be organized in eastern Ukraine, pursuant to the Minsk agreements.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): I thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman and Mr. Hug for their briefings today. It is important to note the positive elements in those briefings, in particular that the ceasefire had generally been holding — if imperfectly and with frequent violations.

But as they have also told the Council, there are serious problems on the ground. Every day Ukrainian citizens are being killed and Ukrainian towns besieged, and the Ukrainian economy continues to suffer, all as a consequence of continued aggression by separatist forces supported by Russia and in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

As Mr. Feltman and Mr. Hug have also reminded us, the conflict is taking a huge toll on the Ukrainian people. Ukraine now has the dubious honour of being among the top 10 countries for the number of internally displaced persons and, worse, humanitarian relief supplies are not getting through. We strongly support Mr. Feltman's call on both the Government of Ukraine and the separatist forces to lift the restraints on access to humanitarian relief.

In February, the Council adopted resolution 2202 (2015), endorsing the Minsk package of measures and calling on the parties to implement them fully, including an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons. As we have been told, the fulfilment of these commitments remains imperfect at best, but, at worst, those commitments have been disregarded. We deem the Council's ongoing scrutiny to be crucial.

The package of measures mandated that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) would support the process of restoring peace, including by monitoring and verifying compliance. Yet the OSCE faces a major obstacle in carrying out this role due to its inability to access conflict areas. The monitors are obstructed from doing their job due to the security risks associated with ceasefire violations, or because of restrictions imposed on them.

It is imperative that all sides ensure that the OSCE be granted the access necessary for it to fulfil its role as envisaged in the Minsk measures. We call on Russia to use its influence over the separatists to ensure that what was agreed in Minsk is implemented and that the OSCE monitors are able to perform their jobs in areas under separatist control. The important work that OSCE monitors are doing on the ground is often difficult and dangerous. We commend them, but their security and safety must continue to be protected.

New Zealand remains very concerned about the situation in eastern Ukraine. We condemn the violence seen this week in Marinka, and reiterate the call for restraint made by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

Heavy weapons must be withdrawn from the contact line and a true ceasefire must be respected. The costs of the conflict continue to mount. A lasting solution is needed. Genuine engagement in the political process laid out in the Minsk agreements, in particular the Trilateral Contact Group and its working groups, will be critical to restoring peace and ending suffering.

As detailed in the latest report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Ukrainian people continue to be subject to serious human rights abuses. Until the package of measures is implemented, including a comprehensive ceasefire, the biggest losers, as always, will be the people of Ukraine. But the other loss will be the long history of close friendship between Russia and Ukraine. That cannot be good for either country.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): We thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman and the Deputy Chief Monitor of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, Mr. Alexander Hug, for their briefings on recent developments in the situation in Ukraine.

We are deeply disturbed by the evolving turn of events in eastern Ukraine. The ceasefire brokered in Minsk is holding in general, despite difficulties with localized violations of the ceasefire and the persistent dire humanitarian situation, the increasing number of displaced people and persistent killings, as detailed in the latest report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. However, the large-scale military operations of the past few days represent a real setback to the expectations we nourished for a real consolidation of the ceasefire as a step towards tangible progress towards sustainable peace in Ukraine.

As we have stated on previous occasions when this issue has been brought to the attention of the Security Council, we reiterate our recognition of the inalienable right of Ukraine to its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. We also reaffirm our principal opposition to threats or use of force as a means of solving disputes among States.

Therefore and in conclusion, we call for the immediate cessation of hostilities and urge the parties to return to the negotiating table in the framework of the Trilateral Contact Group. We call for the withdrawal of heavy weapons and the full return to the provisions of the Minsk package of measures. We further request that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission be given access to monitor and verify the parties' full compliance with the Minsk agreements. Too much blood has been shed and too much senseless suffering has already been endured by the Ukrainian people. We urge strict respect for the international commitments agreed to in Minsk and international guarantees that the people of Ukraine may be allowed to live in peace, freedom and security.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela thanks you, Mr. President, for convening this briefing on Ukraine. We also welcome Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman and Mr. Alexander Hug, Deputy Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, for the information they have given us.

Our country expresses its concern at the recent escalation in the armed conflict as a result of the fighting in Marinka and other cities west of Donetsk, which have led to the loss of human life and injuries. Venezuela reiterates its call on the parties to promote a peaceful political negotiated solution to this crisis. We also urge them to respect international humanitarian law, in particular the obligation to ensure the protection of civilians.

We insist on the full implementation of resolution 2202 (2015), in support of the decision reached by the negotiators of Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany on 12 February in Minsk. We must pursue efforts to achieve a political and diplomatic solution to the Ukrainian crisis, in which the parties would commit to working towards a firm and lasting peace. A definitive end to the hostilities therefore remains an objective that cannot be postponed. Any incident should be investigated independently on the basis of reliable evidence that should lead to the adoption of measures that meet the aspirations for peace and stability of the populations affected by the conflict.

To that end, the parties must continue to demonstrate good will to achieve a joint agreement. In that regard, the mediation and efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe deserve the support of the Council, and all parties should facilitate its work. We must fulfil the agreements reached in Minsk to address the underlying causes of this conflict and respect the political and human rights of all those living in that territory, irrespective of their ethnic origin. We encourage the implementation of the provisions of the

Minsk agreement that are being implemented by the Trilateral Contact Group. In that regard, on 6 May we were informed of the establishment of four working groups assigned to the areas of security, political affairs, internally displaced persons and refugees, and humanitarian assistance, as well as economic issues and rehabilitation.

The parties must move to restore conditions conducive to the maintenance of dialogue, with the support of the international community. That is the only way to channel the concerns of all parties in order to find a solution to this conflict. We cannot allow to prevail a propagandistic environment that incites confrontation and ethnic hatred, or the thousands of accusations that contribute only to fanning the conflict and exacerbating the situation, all of which are preventing the implementation of the Minsk Agreement.

Venezuela insists on restraint in order to prevent the dialogue from being affected by unilateral actions that would jeopardize the peace process. In that regard, my country rejects the application of unilateral coercive sanctions, which violate international law and erode the necessary trust between the parties.

Finally, we reiterate our call on all parties to redouble their efforts in the search for a just and lasting political solution to the benefit of their peoples.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank Jeffrey Feltman and Alexander Hug for their briefings. I would also like to thank Malaysia for having convened this meeting of the Security Council involving the application of resolution 2202 (2015), in which we made a commitment to closely follow up the situation in that area.

Unfortunately, in the past few days we have seen events that have made this meeting necessary. We have listened to the briefers talk about a serious worsening of the situation. I believe that everyone here agrees that the Minsk agreements are the only tool we have. Promoted by France and Germany, they were accepted by the parties and endorsed by the Security Council. Consequently, we must give them our full and unconditional support. However, during the past weeks, there have been major violations, and we have listened to very detailed explanations of the situation in Marinka. In the end, what is happening?

What is happening is that those who must face the consequences are always the civilian population. The figures speak for themselves. We have heard the figures of 1.3 million displaced persons, of 600,000 newly displaced in a relatively short period of time. This occurred in a country, Ukraine, that previously was not on the list of the internally displaced persons but now unfortunately figures on the list of the top ten. It is a tragic situation in Donbas, and there are major difficulties in humanitarian access for both personnel and supplies. The humanitarian response of the international community has been insufficient.

Accordingly, Spain calls anew for an immediate ceasefire and for the subsequent and also immediate withdrawal of heavy weapons. We call upon Russia to exercise all of its influence and to require from the rebel groups the immediate and strict implementation of what has been agreed, thus complying also with its obligation as a signatory to the Minsk agreements. We also call on Ukraine to continue to move forward in complying with the commitments undertaken in Minsk, including the non-military components of the agreement. I trust that at the next meeting, on 10 June, in the Normandy format, we will have seen progress and be able to say that the Security Council meeting today was useful in reaching that goal.

Like the Ambassador of New Zealand, I would also like to refer to the disturbing situation regarding respect for human rights and the serious violations that we have seen. I trust that there will be no situation of impunity, as has been the case in other parts of the globe.

With respect to the OSCE, I will make two brief comments. Spain is concerned by the difficulties that the OSCE Mission is encountering in complying with its obligations, and we would like it to share, without delay, the information that has been requested. Spain also supports the extension of the OSCE mandate. Hopefully, it will enjoy access to an area somewhat larger than the 1 per cent to which the Ambassador of Lithuania referred.

Lastly, any lasting and sustainable solution necessarily involves respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this urgent meeting. I thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman and Mr. Hug, Deputy Chief Monitor for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

It is disturbing that the Council must again return to this issue, since fighting has flared up and Russian-backed separatists have broken the ceasefire

provided for in the Minsk agreements. The fighting on Wednesday around Marinka and Kyivsky was an alarming escalation of violence in eastern Ukraine. It is clear from the OSCE spot report that this was a separatist assault on Ukrainian military units. The OSCE observed heavy weapons mobilizing in the territory controlled by the so-called Donetsk People's Republic. Those weapons moved westward, in complete disregard of the terms of the Minsk agreements. Action of that kind and on that scale was clearly premeditated.

We have previously seen Russian-backed separatists seek to provoke a Ukrainian response and then twist that — as the Russian media are again seeking to do — into claims that it was the Ukrainians who launched an assault. These feints are transparent, and Russian claims and those of their separatist proxies carry no credibility. The world is watching. We know who is supporting the separatists. We have seen Russian soldiers captured in the Donbas. We have heard Russia's attempts to come up with innocent explanations for their presence there. We have noted the amendments to the Russian State secrecy law, which now prohibits the release of information about the deaths of soldiers in peacetime. This legislative action suggests that the Russian authorities want to silence the justified questions they are facing from families, journalists and civil society. We have seen Russian-supplied T-72 tanks and Uragan rocket launchers operating on Ukrainian soil, and we have seen countless conveys of supplies flooding across the border from Russia. Russia claims these are humanitarian supplies but will not cooperate with the legitimate Government in Kyiv in a way that allow for verification of these claims.

The tragedy and the hypocrisy of the separatists is that the ordinary people of Ukraine are the ones who suffer. More than 6,000 have been killed, and more than 1.3 million have fled their homes. We hope that Mr. Šimonović, of the High Commissioner's Office, will be able to brief the Council on his recent report on the distressing human rights situation in eastern Ukraine later this month. There are three things that now need to happen to prevent further escalation.

First, Russia must immediately withdraw its military forces from Ukraine, stop its flow of weapons to the separatists and make every effort to secure a political solution to this crisis. This includes the immediate release of Nadiya Savchenko, who has been illegally detained for nearly a year.

Secondly, we urge Russia to use its considerable influence on the separatists so that they cease their provocative behaviour and live up to their commitment to implement fully the Minsk agreements. The separatists forces are Russia's creation; they are Russia's tool. Russia has the capacity and the influence to control the separatist forces. It must exercise that influence to ensure compliance with the Minsk agreements. If it is not ready to do so, the Council must be clear in its condemnation.

Thirdly, it is vital that all parties engage seriously in the process and implement the Minsk agreements. The Trilateral Contact Group and Trilateral working groups are essential mechanisms for making this happen, and their roles are clearly spelled out in paragraph 13 of the February Minsk agreement. We need all parties, both Russians and Ukrainians, to engage in these groups in a genuine and constructive way. We were disturbed to hear that the economic working group was not able to meet earlier this week because a Russian participant did not attend and that Russian and separatists participants walked out of a session of the Trilateral Contact Group.

The European Union has made clear that the duration of sanctions against Russia is directly linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements, and through resolution 2202 (2015) this Council has made clear that we too expect complete compliance with the Minsk agreements. So there is no military solution. The Minsk agreements are the only way that stability can be restored in eastern Ukraine. We must all recommit to their implementation and to upholding the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Let us not forget that the crisis started with the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia. More than a year since that illegal annexation, we cannot lose sight of what is at stake in eastern Ukraine. A return to violence and conflict would come at a terrible human cost for all sides, and it would represent a further attack on the rules-based international system that we have shared and valued for the past 70 years. We all depend on that system enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Any escalation in Ukraine calls into question Russia's commitment to those principles.

Our relationship to Russia extends far beyond the borders of Ukraine, but in order to foster the cooperation and trust we want, those relationships must be based on honesty, mutual respect and dialogue. Until Russia is

able to demonstrate that commitment in Ukraine, the Council needs to remain actively engaged in overseeing the full and timely implementation of resolution 2202 (2015).

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Feltman and Mr. Hug for their briefings. In February, the leaders of Russia, France, Germany and Ukraine reached an important consensus in Minsk on the political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis. The Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2202 (2015), endorsing the package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements by the parties concerned, which reflected support for a political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis. After the Council's adoption of the resolution, progress was made in such areas as the ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons and the establishment of working groups, as outlined in the Minsk package of measures.

For some time, the overall situation in eastern Ukraine remained stable and a ceasefire was generally observed. Recently, the situation in eastern Ukraine has again deteriorated. China calls on the parties concerned to keep calm, exercise restraint, consolidate the hard-won ceasefire and press ahead with a political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis in order to achieve peace and tranquillity in Ukraine at an early date. The international community should make joint efforts in that direction. The Council's discussion should also play a constructive role in that regard.

China has always respected the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, including Ukraine, and it believes that dialogue and consultations are the only solution to the Ukrainian issue. China calls on the parties concerned to make joint efforts to find a comprehensive, balanced and lasting political solution as soon as possible so as to achieve peace, tranquillity, stability and development in Ukraine and the region as a whole. China will continue to play a constructive role in promoting a political settlement of the Ukrainian issue.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mr. Jeffrey Feltman and Mr. Alexander Hug for their briefings on the situation in Ukraine.

We reiterate our support for the ongoing steps taken by the Secretary-General and the United Nations to bring an end to the situation in Ukraine, and we support the vital work of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in mediating the conflict and implementing the Minsk agreements. We express our deep concern over the recent escalation of violence in Ukraine. As we have stated on many occasions, we believe that full compliance with the ceasefire, monitored and verified by the Special Monitoring Mission of the OSCE under the provisions of the Minsk agreements, and dialogue between the parties is the only way to achieve lasting peace.

We underscore the importance of strengthening the rule of law and the obligation to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, General Assembly resolution 68/262 and international law. We have also reaffirmed on many occasions the importance of upholding those principles, which we consider indispensable. We regret the deterioration of the security situation and its serious consequences for the civilian population, which continues to suffer human rights violations and abuses. We urge the parties to respect human rights, including full respect for the rights of minorities, and we call for the perpetrators of such violations to be brought to justice. We recall that accountability is also a way of implementing the Minsk agreements.

The complexity of the crisis in eastern Ukraine is not limited to the security sphere. More than 5 million people require humanitarian assistance, and the number of internally displaced persons and those seeking refuge continues to increase, making it is urgent to address the problem. It is also crucial to ensure rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to the affected population, and all parties must respect international humanitarian law. The international community should help alleviate the crisis. We appeal to donors to contribute to the 2015 Ukraine humanitarian response plan, which so far has been funded at only 29 per cent.

We are at a critical juncture when it is imperative that the Council reiterates a message to the parties on the importance of creating conditions for the effective implementation of the Minsk agreements. The facts reveal that apprehensions about the precariousness of effective enforcement have some merit in the context of structural tensions. Only political dialogue within the framework of the Minsk agreements could help to overcome those critical cycles of violence.

Mr. Cherif (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Mr. Alexander Hug, Deputy

Chief Monitor of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, for their briefings.

Chad is deeply concerned over the resumption on 3 June of violent encounters between the Ukrainian army and separatist groups in the area of Marinka, approximately 30 kilometres from Donetsk. The fighting with heavy artillery, including Grad rocket launcers and cannons, has claimed a high number of victims on both sides. Chad strongly condemns the resurgence of violence, in violation of the Minsk agreements, which established a ceasefire and should have opened the way towards a comprehensive settlement of the conflict through dialogue. Since 12 February, incursions have been reported every day, demonstrating that the ceasefire has merely mitigated the intensity of the fighting and limited it to certain areas around Donetsk and Luhansk. Nevertheless, the increased tensions of recent days in the conflict zone raise fears of a serious threat of escalation that could thrust Ukraine into civil war on a larger scale and thereby seriously undermine the implementation of the Minsk agreements.

Chad is convinced that the solution to the Ukrainian situation is a political one that largely depends on the resolve of the parties concerned to commit themselves to a genuine negotiation process in order to reach sustainable peace. To that end, we reiterate our appeal to the parties to return to calm and restraint in order to avoid a new spiral of violence and to resume the full implementation of the Minsk agreements.

The human cost of the Ukrainian crisis is very heavy. More than 6,500 people have been killed, 11,000 wounded and more than 1 million displaced internally. Chad therefore urges all parties to take the path of a direct and inclusive dialogue aimed at achieving a political settlement of the crisis.

In conclusion, we encourage the countries and organizations that have any influence on the parties to spare no efforts to bring them to firmly commit to seeking a lasting political solution to the crisis while respecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Ukraine, in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): I would like to thank Mr. Feltman,Under-Secretary-General, and Mr. Hug, Deputy Chief Monitor for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), for their very lucid briefings.

The recent escalation of fighting in eastern Ukraine is very disturbing, as we have all heard from members of the Council this morning. Reports of the large-scale offensive by separatists in Marinka on 4 June, which resulted in the deaths of over 20 persons, underscores the fragility of the situation. There is a risk that the ceasefire of February 2015 may totally collapse if the unrelenting violations persist. We urge both sides to take deliberate and concrete steps to de-escalate the situation. We all agree that the fulcrum of such a de-escalation is the Minsk agreement. Indeed, it was designed to stabilize the situation. It is therefore vital that the parties act in accordance with their obligations under the Minsk agreement.

Need we reiterate at this point, in the Council, that a military solution to this crisis is unattainable? We would like to encourage both sides to work diligently and move purposefully towards achieving a political settlement that is negotiated, with justice and peace as the guiding principles. We would like to see the conflict resolved in a manner that takes into account the concerns of the separatists while unreservedly respecting the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Ukraine.

We would like to pay tribute this morning to the leadership and staff of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission for their unrelenting efforts in monitoring the ceasefire. The regular media updates by the Mission have enabled us to follow closely not only its achievements but also the challenges it encounters. We encourage the parties and all stakeholders to continue to give their full cooperation to the Mission to facilitate its very essential role.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Malaysia.

I join my colleagues in expressing our appreciation to Mr. Jeffrey Feltman and Mr. Alexander Hug for their comprehensive briefings.

Malaysia is greatly alarmed by the recent escalation in fighting in eastern Ukraine. We have heard from the briefers on the gravity of the recent situation, which is the worst since the signing of the Minsk agreement in February 2015. We join other Council members in strongly urging all parties to fully comply with the provisions of the Minsk agreement, as stipulated in resolution 2202 (2015). We also call for the parties to cooperate fully with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring

Mission in order to enable them to carry out their mandate as laid out in the Minsk agreement.

Malaysia welcomes the progress made thus far in the implementation of the Minsk agreement. Until very recently, the ceasefire has generally been respected, despite incidents of low-intensity and sporadic fighting. We note that both sides withdrew heavy weapons in the early months after the signing of the Minsk agreement.

We welcome and commend the establishment of four working groups in the context of the Trilateral Contact Group, focusing on political, security, economic and humanitarian issues.

On a related note, I would like to highlight that the overall improvement in the security situation between March and April 2015 due to the ceasefire has allowed for the return of an international team, including Malaysian personnel, to complete the recovery mission for Malaysia Airlines flight MH-17. We regret the fact that it took the Malaysian recovery team almost a year following the downing of the aircraft to be able to enter the crash site due to the ongoing fighting in eastern Ukraine. As our team recently managed to collect more remains and belongings of the victims of flight MH-17, we were provided with a grim reminder of the tragic humanitarian costs of the conflict in Ukraine.

As we have heard from the briefers, whatever progress made in implementing the Minsk agreement is still far from irreversible. Despite claims by both sides that heavy weapons have been withdrawn, we remain concerned that movements or presence of weapons in violation of the Minsk agreement have been observed by the Monitoring Mission. Inspections by the Mission of heavy-weapon holding areas also found some weapons missing or unaccounted for.

With the most recent clashes in Marinka, the Minsk agreement is in real danger of unravelling. The civilian population, in particular children, would undoubtedly bear the brunt of an escalation in the situation. It is heart-wrenching that as of 15 May 2015, over 160,000 children have been internally displaced in eastern Ukraine, 68 killed and almost 200 injured. Children continue to live with their families in bomb shelters and to be internally displaced and deprived of basic necessities such as water and health care.

We would remind all parties of their obligations under international law and international humanitarian law, particularly with regard to the protection of civilians. We also urge all parties to allow for safe and unrestricted humanitarian access to those in need.

The parties to the conflict must take a step back from the spiralling violence in Ukraine and recommit themselves to the full implementation of the Minsk agreement. We reiterate our commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We appeal to the conflicting parties not to lose the opportunity for peace once again.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of June.

It is of high importance that the Security Council is holding a meeting on the current situation in and around Ukraine. I would like to express my gratitude to our briefers, Mr. Jeffrey Feltman and Mr. Alexander Hug, for their important messages on the current situation on the ground and the measures taken by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to monitor the implementation of the Minsk agreements.

I would like to express my gratitude to all members of the Council for their dedication to the implementation of the Minsk agreements. I thank them for their solidarity.

Two days ago, we listened carefully to a lecture from the Russian delegation on what Ukraine is doing wrong. I would like to start by reminding the Russian authorities that Ukraine has a full right to defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty, which are being challenged by Russia's occupation of Crimea and the aggression against our eastern regions. This right to defend ourselves is provided by our Constitution and the Charter of the United Nations — namely, Article 51 — and includes the right to invite other countries to help us with self-defence.

What are the legal sources to justify the Russian decision to send weapons, troops, mercenaries? There are none. No justification can be found in the Charter of the United Nations. That is why I would like to start by drawing the Security Council's attention to the Russian Federation's and the Russian-backed

terrorists' grave violations of the ceasefire and Minsk agreements in general, which were explicitly endorsed by resolution 2202 (2015).

On 3 June, the militants, with the direct backing of Russian regular armed forces, carried out a massive targeted assault on Ukrainian forces around Marinka as well as an attack near Shchastya. Some 1,000 persons, including Russian regular military cadre, and 30 tanks were engaged in the assault near Marinka. Ukrainian forces were shelled 82 times, including 11 times with the Grad system. Artillery fire was professionally coordinated, which also attests to the presence of Russian regular artillery crews.

These attacks were intended to test the defence and response capabilities of the Ukrainian forces and to seize control of territory and vital socioeconomic infrastructure — the Karlovske water reservoir, the Kurakhove and Shchastya power stations, and the Volnovakha railway hub. If the attackers had captured Marinka, they would have been able to seize positions from which they could impose an economic blockade on Mariupol, surround Ukrainian forces in Avdiivka and near Donetsk airport, thereby enabling a larger offensive along the front line. The Ukrainian anti-terrorist operation forces fought off these assaults. However, five servicemen were killed in action, four of them in Marinka, and 38 were wounded. Moreover, three civilians were reported dead.

Meanwhile, after the failure of the 3 June assault, Russian-backed terrorists continued attacks overnight. In the direction of Mariupol, the terrorists shelled Shyrokyne with artillery, mortars, grenade launchers and small arms. In the direction of Luhansk, the militants attacked Donetske, Novotoshkivske, Stanytsya Luhanska and Krymske. In the direction of Artemivsk, the terrorists shelled Zolote with grenade launchers and Leninske with small arms. In the direction of Donetsk, the terrorists attacked Pisky with mortars and Novotroitske with grenade launchers.

Russia and its proxies in Donbas have repeatedly violated the Minsk agreements of 5 and 19 September 2014 as well as of 12 February 2015. The assault near Mariynka became the second large-scale assault after the flagrant assault on Debaltseve in February. It occurred immediately after Russia's attempt to disrupt the meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group and its thematic subgroups in Minsk on 2 June. We are sure that the massive targeted assault around Marinka was planned in advance by the Russian Federation, and the conclusions of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission prove it. In particular,

> "Between 2230 hours on 2 June and 0530 hours on 3 June the [Mission] observed the movement of a large amount of heavy weapons in the so-called Donetsk People's Republic ... in a westerly direction towards the contact line — close to Marinka, preceding and during the fighting".

The Mission observed and tracked, inter alia, movements of armoured vehicles, including battle tanks, heavy artillery, military trucks and more. It is noteworthy that the Mission made several attempts to contact the high-ranking leaders of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic in order to facilitate a cessation of the fighting around Marinka, but without success. The so-called leaders did not respond to the Mission.

Ukraine has consistently and in good faith lived up to the Minsk agreements in full and tried to use all possible diplomatic leverage to deter escalation. Thanks to the Ukrainian Army's effective defence, Ukraine has avoided new wave of conflict escalation in Donbas and discouraged the Kremlin's attempts to subvert the provisions of both the resolution 2202 (2015) and the Minsk agreements by making accusations against the Ukrainian side. I would like to underscore that we promptly informed the OSCE Mission that Ukrainian armed forces' heavy weapons would be returned to the contact line in order to deal with the real threat posed by the fighting in Marinka and to defend civilians living in the local areas.

The recent provocative steps taken by the Russian side clearly indicate Russia's intentions to escalate the conflict and disrupt the Minsk process. The recent assaults are an attempt by the Russian side to exert military pressure on international players on the eve of important international events. The task of the Security Council is to prevent the aggressor from taking further destructive actions in this direction. We have to use all possible political and diplomatic leverage in this regard.

It is not only the OSCE Mission that continuously witnesses the deterioration of the situation on the ground. A few days ago, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights published its tenth report on the human rights situation in Ukraine. It is important that the report clearly highlights the responsibility of the Russian Federation for the deterioration of the situation in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions

of Ukraine. In particular, it takes note of the Russian Federation's supplying modern types of heavy weaponry and mercenaries and widely confirms that crimes and human rights violations have been committed by militants with Russia's support. The difficult human rights situation in the temporarily occupied Crimea is also reflected in the document. The Office notes that the so-called Crimean authorities continue to restrict the rights of ethnic Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar people.

Let me go back to where I began. Taking into account Russia's serious violations of resolution 2202 (2015), I would kindly request that Security Council members promptly react to those provocations and violations and make every effort to promote a peaceful resolution of the conflict. The international community previously stated that an assault on Mariupol would be a red line which, if crossed by Russia, would trigger an immediate and resolute response. In the light of the events of 3 June, the same approach should be applied to the Marinka case.

At the same time, we urge the Russian Federation and its proxies to immediately start fulfilling their obligations under the provisions of the Minsk agreements and resolution 2202 (2015). We demand that Russia withdraw its armed forces from Ukraine, stop fortifying the terrorist organizations with personnel and weapons, cease its destabilizing and provocative actions in Ukraine, and release all hostages. Russia must also end its occupation of Crimea, which remains an integral part of Ukraine.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has requested the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I will not go into a discussion with my Ukrainian colleague of the Charter of the United Nations, international law or international humanitarian law, for that matter, since too many of those instruments' provisions are being violated by the Kyiv authorities in their so-called anti-terrorist but in fact punitive operations in eastern Ukraine.

I would like to make a few comments with regard to the statement made by the representative of the United States of America. In her statement, she raised a very surprising issue — that of the Kyiv authorities' provocation of hostilities by their systematic, months-long attacks on cities. Is this not a provocation? Unfortunately, the Council does not see that or Kyiv's many other actions that violate the Minsk agreements and impede the implementation of the political provisions of the package of measures.

After the Sochi meeting with President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov, Mr. Kerry called upon Kyiv not to use force. Unfortunately, the request made by the representative of the United States was not heard. We would like United States diplomacy to be more consistent and to follow up on the pronouncements of its Secretary of State. We do not want to believe that there is a war party in Washington, D.C., like that in Kyiv.

We cannot agree with the statement by our British colleague that the crisis in Ukraine did not begin with the unification of Crimea and Russia. The crisis began with the externally supported campaign to overthrow a democratically elected President of Ukraine. It was exacerbated when efforts to implement the 21 February 2014 agreement failed. Political influences were also at work, followed by the terror in Odessa in May 2014 and the campaign we are seeing now in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Finally, in our discussion today we have heard a number of unfounded and extraordinarily polemical statements, but I would still like to suggest that this meeting has been helpful. We affirmed our commitment to the Minsk agreement and to resolution 2202 (2015). We think it important that various delegations called for direct dialogue between Kyiv, Donetsk and Luhansk. That theme was touched on even by the United States, although too timidly. That kind of dialogue is absolutely crucial to full compliance with the Minsk agreement, which Russia continues to strive for.

The President: The representative of the United States has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Ms. Power (United States of America): In closing, I would just like to note the absurdity of two things. The first is the representative of the Russian Federation's citing of the Charter of the United Nations in the context of a discussion about Ukraine when, despite the fact that the Russian presence in Ukraine is an open secret, there is nothing secret about Russia's declared annexation of Crimea; and that what was once denied in this Chamber — namely, that Russian regular soldiers were in Crimea — is now an openly admitted part of the facts on the ground that Russia has created in Crimea, and is what we have seen consistently, as the story has

shifted. I think the representative of Ukraine asked a very important question. what is the legal authority for Russia's presence in eastern Ukraine? Where in the United Nations Charter is that stipulated?

The second irony is the great emphasis on a political process — an emphasis that everyone in the Council is deeply invested in. And yet Russia's response from start to finish in this crisis has been coercive and militarized. That emphasis on the political implementation — the core reality that there can only be a political solution — is something that we urge the Russian Federation to embrace not only in words but in actions on the ground.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I will be very brief. Fortunately, the Secretariat has established detailed protocols for the Security Council that cover all the questions that the representative of the United States touched on just now and that save me the trouble of a more extensive reaction to her remarks.

The President: There are no more requests for further statements.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7458

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7458th meeting
Tuesday, 9 June 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ibrahim	(Malaysia)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Non-proliferation

Note by the President of the Security Council (S/2015/401)

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15-17263 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation

Note by the President of the Security Council (S/2015/401)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/413, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2015/401, which contains the text of a note by the President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2224 (2015).

The meeting rose at 10.05 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7459

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7459th meeting
Tuesday, 9 June 2015, 10.05 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ibrahim	(Malaysia)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Thirty-sixth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2015/320)

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15-17275 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Thirty-sixth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2015/320)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Côte d'Ivoire to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/320, which contains the thirty-sixth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

I now give the floor to Ms. Mindaoudou.

Ms. Mindaoudou (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Council today on the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2015/320), dated 7 May 2015, and to provide an update on major recent developments in the country, including those relating to the preparations for the presidential elections in October.

Four months from now, the people of Côte d'Ivoire will go to the polls to choose their next president in an environment very different from that of 2010. Much has been accomplished since the election of October 2010. The country's stability is gradually improving. The economy is growing and the people have been able to get on with their lives in a peaceful environment. While political disagreements remain, a national consensus on constructive dialogue continues to strengthen. However, some fringe radicals among the opposition are increasingly advocating for public demonstrations.

Political dialogue between the Government and the opposition is progressing. During the talks on 29 January, concrete measures were taken to fund, on an exceptional basis, the opposition political parties that do not hold seats in the National Assembly. Political dialogue between the Government and the political opposition resumed on 26 May after a break of four months. Sixteen opposition political parties participated and discussions focused on important topics, including, in particular, the need to foster a calm political environment, creating conditions to support a credible electoral process, the return of exiles and the release of prisoners. The Government and the opposition political parties also decided to hold monthly meetings until the elections. It should be mentioned here that progress achieved in the political dialogue has helped to improve the security situation and foster stability in Côte d'Ivoire.

The efforts by the Government and the opposition parties to maintain constructive dialogue are to be welcomed. It is important that this dialogue continues in order to create and sustain an environment conducive to holding a free and fair election. However, certain political stakeholders are still tempted to use inflammatory rhetoric. They must continue to be encouraged to act responsibly and comply fully with the law throughout the electoral period.

Political posturing ahead of the upcoming presidential election has resulted in the reconfiguration of the political scene. For instance, the Front populaire ivoirien and the Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire are experiencing a period of instability. Nonetheless, divergent viewpoints and political positions are mostly being expressed peacefully. I hope that that peaceful expression will continue because it is something that should mark any political process.

In the exercise of my good offices mandate, I have attempted to persuade the Government and the political parties towards dialogue. I have also used my mandate to encourage people to support the efforts by the authorities to foster peace and stability throughout the country. To that end, initiatives to promote social cohesion and reconciliation, as well as peacebuilding initiatives in the various regions that have been supported by the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the United Nations country team, have been instrumental.

For Côte d'Ivoire, the October presidential election is an important milestone in terms of consolidating the achievements of recent years. In preparations for that election, the electoral code was an amended and adopted on 2 April. Voter registration in over 2,000 centres was launched on 1 June, and should be finalized by 30 June. The final voter list should be ready by 31 August. As Head of the United Nations system in Côte d'Ivoire, I have ensured enhanced coordination with international partners and the Independent Electoral Commission as part of United Nations support to the Government in terms of the electoral process.

The process to provide reparations to victims of the 2010-2011 post-election crisis has been launched. The Government has also started to implement some of the key recommendations set out in the final document of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, even though that report was not published. On 24 March, the Government announced the establishment of the National Commission for the Reconciliation and Compensation of Victims, which aims to register all unlisted victims of the successive crises in Côte d'Ivoire since 1990. The Commmision's executive body, the National Programme for Social Cohesion, will implement the reparations process. It will be important for it to ensure that the compensation of victims is an inclusive process.

With regard to the fight against impunity, perceptions of one-sided justice remain a topic of discussion among Ivoirians, even though investigations into serious crimes committed during the 2010-2011 post-election crisis are currently being undertaken by the Special Investigation and Examination Cell. I encourage the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to continue and complete its investigations so as to bring to justice all those who have been recognized as being guilty of human rights violations and abuses, regardless of their political affiliation, as that will greatly contribute to healing past wounds and fostering reconciliation.

The first mechanism to enhance gender parity in all State institutions, the National Council for Women, has been launched. This development is a very timely one during this electoral year, as the Council could play a key role in encouraging greater participation by women at all levels of decision-making, including in politics. I also commend the work carried out by the committee of national experts on conflict-related sexual violence, which, with the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI), has continued its activities to raise awareness of human rights and international humanitarian law. However, I remain concerned about frequent reports of gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation. I hope that those issues will be concretely addressed in the implementation of the national strategy on gender-based violence.

As for security, the Government has made headway in addressing outstanding grievances by FRCI elements following their protests in November 2014. It has constructed barracks and paid salaries retroactively. As for reforms, the National Assembly adopted the law on the organization of the national defence and the Ivoirian armed forces on 9 March. This is an important step towards the professionalization of the FRCI and building public trust in national defence institutions. UNOCI will continue to support the Government in its implementation of the necessary reforms. I commend the Government's continued efforts to improve the gender balance in the Gendamerie, with the inclusion of female trainees.

With the presidential elections approaching, however, the lack of equipment among Ivoirian law enforcement and security institutions responsible for maintaining public order is a matter of some concern, as calls into question their operational capability to control crowds in a democratically appropriate manner.

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire has set 30 June as the deadline for completing the process to disarm 64,000 former combatants. Both the Government and UNOCI have intensified awareness-raising activities, and the number of former combatants enrolled in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process has increased significantly in recent months. Support will be needed beyond the closure of the DDR programme in June, as a significant number of former combatants will still be in the process of reintegration, which is expected to continue until January 2016. UNOCI will continue to provide technical and programmatic support to the Authority on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration in order to formulate a viable road map for pro-post June 2015 activities.

The security situation has remained stable with an overall downward trend in criminal activities. No major incidents have been reported since my last briefing to the Council (see S/PV.7358). Having said that, armed robberies and banditry continue to pose a security

challenge for the country. Demonstrations and strikes have also been organized by university lecturers, schoolteachers and public health workers, as well as by students, during the reporting period. Negotiations between the trade unions and the Government led to a cessation of strikes.

During the quadripartite meeting on 10 March — between the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, UNOCI and the United Nations Mission in Liberia — both Governments acknowledged improvements in the security situation on the border. Bilateral cooperation has been strengthened with the resumption of quadripartite and tripartite meetings. Now that Liberia has been declared Ebola-free, borders have been reopened, which has promoted cross-border activities.

Concerning the UNOCI force and police, pursuant to resolution 2162 (2014), UNOCI will reduce its military strength to 5,430 troops and its police component to 1,500 personnel. The operational capability of the force has been enhanced by the 650-strong quick response force, which is now fully operational and which will enable us to assist UNMIL in the implementation of its mandate and to respond to any emergency situations in Liberia. As a result, with the aid of our aviation assets, we are now able to deploy 100 troops anywhere within Côte d'Ivoire within 12 hours.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey my appreciation to the members of the Council for the support they have lent us in finalizing the establishment of the quick response force as required pursuant to the mandate. The more mobile, agile and flexible posture, which today characterizes the force, has already demonstrated in its effectiveness and enabled us to respond in a timely way to threats against civilians like those seen in recent months in the western border areas.

On the eve of the renewal of the UNOCI mandate, I am confident and optimistic about the future of Côte d'Ivoire. However, we must remain vigilant. In a few months, Côte d'Ivoire will organize the very first elections following those of 2010. They will be decisive for the country. The renewal of the UNOCI mandate at this crucial juncture will be important to again demonstrate the desire of the international community to consolidate the achievements and assist the country in turning a page after the 2010 post-election crisis. The creation of a peaceful and enabling environment in the lead-up to, during and after the presidential elections will also require advancing the level of political dialogue in the areas of the disarmament process, security sector reform, justice, reparations for victims and the return of refugees. In that regard, the combined support of the Security Council, Member States, international and regional partners, the United Nations and its team in Côte d'Ivoire remain essential to ensure that Côte d'Ivoire can move forward towards the finalization of all of those key processes.

I would once again like to thank the Council for its invaluable support and its very useful guidelines for implementing the UNOCI mandate.

The President: I thank Ms. Mindaoudou for her briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bouah-Kamon (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, as this is the first time that I take the floor in the Security Council as the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations, allow me to thank you, Mr. President, and the organ that you lead for the sustained attention paid to my country since the difficult situation that we have had to deal with in the past few years.

My delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/320), which underscores the tremendous progress made in Côte d'Ivoire since the accession of His Excellency Mr. Alassane Ouattara to the country's presidency, the specific effects of which can be seen today in a normalized political situation and a healthy, growing economy. National reconciliation, as indicated in the report, displays fresh dynamism through the political dialogue with the opposition. Social cohesion is gradually being strengthened. The security index has significantly improved, and is comparable today to that of a normal country.

The process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, which is drawing to a conclusion, has one of the best implementation rates. That is why I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Ms. Aichatou Mindaoudou, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, for the outstanding work that she has achieved on the ground in cooperation with the Ivorian authorities. Of course, a number of challenges remain, as noted in the report, and the Government has been doing its best to resolve them. Despite the progress in the area of security, the

Ivorian Government recognizes the importance of tirelessly continuing our efforts. The same could be said with regard to meeting social demands and with regard to the need for national reconciliation.

The highlight of political life this year in Côte d'Ivoire will be the general elections, to be held in accordance with the Ivorian Constitution. The elections will mark a crucial step in the transition towards stability and peace. The successful completion of the elections therefore will be a major challenge for the Ivorian Government, and in that respect we are paying close attention to the effort. The Government wishes to see the holding of free, transparent and inclusive elections, which will require the support of the international community, especially the support of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). In that respect, my delegation requests an extension of the UNOCI mission and a broadening of its mandate to include logistical support for the electoral process as proposed in the Secretary-General's report. Assistance to the Ivorian Government for successful elections will mark a decisive step towards the successful completion of the enormous achievements obtained by UNOCI before its full withdrawal in early 2017.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reiterate the Ivorian Government's gratitude to the Security Council for its commitment to fully cooperate in the success of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7460

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7460th meeting
Wednesday, 10 June 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ibrahim	(Malaysia)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gimolieca
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2015/378)

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15-17399 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2015/378)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/378, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mulet.

Mr. Mulet (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, for this new opportunity to make a statement before the Council. As you just stated, Sir, the subject of the meeting this morning is the situation in Darfur and the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/378) on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), which was transmitted to the members of the Council on 26 May. My statement will focus on two main points. First, I will make a few general observations on the situation in Darfur and the activities of UNAMID; then, I will weigh in on the process of drafting a withdrawal strategy for UNAMID and related recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General.

(*spoke in English*)

The report before the Council analyses a very serious security situation, including the continued need for substantial humanitarian assistance in Darfur and the limited progress in the peace process. In addition, it describes a deeply concerning increase in violent attacks by armed assailants against UNAMID and humanitarian personnel. Most worrisome is the devastating impact that the security situation has had on innocent civilians and the obstacles that violence has created for their protection and for humanitarian operations.

The second phase of the Government's military offensive, called Operation Decisive Summer, has resulted in high numbers of newly displaced people. Humanitarian organizations estimate that at least 78,000 people have been newly displaced by conflict in Darfur this year alone. In addition, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has received reports of some 130,000 additional internally displaced persons (IDPs), but has not yet been able to verify that. Most of those unverified IDPs are said to be in the Jebel Marra area, where the heaviest fighting has been taking place and which is mostly inaccessible to humanitarian partners. There is also significant concern about reports of indiscriminate attacks against civilians and other violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

In addition, the current year has seen intercommunal conflicts leading to periodic outbreaks of violence. Beyond the resource conflicts that ignited this violence, the destabilizing impact of broader political tensions and numerous paramilitary groups and militias, the proliferation of small arms and the manner in which local authorities have responded to insecurity have all contributed to aggravating the situation. Crime is also a major source of insecurity, with various armed persons taking advantage of the relative absence of security forces in most areas to attack civilians. This worsening security environment in parts of Darfur continues to have significant implications for the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and UNAMID.

Despite the difficult operating environment, including movement restrictions and other obstructions imposed by the belligerent parties, UNAMID remains resolute in its commitment to deliver on its three strategic priorities.

As part of the continued implementation of the strategic review, the United Nations Secretariat continues to work with the mission's leadership, the African Union and other partners to ensure that peacekeepers in Darfur are able to carry out their mandate effectively and efficiently. The adequate responses by units when attacked and the proactive

approach shown when protecting IDPs are indicators of continuous improvements as a result of the requested changes in attitude, robustness and training.

On the civilian side, the focus has remained on the streamlining of personnel and the process of transferring some of UNAMID's mandated tasks to the United Nations country team. An analysis has been conducted to identify which of these tasks could be carried out by UNAMID, which should be implemented jointly with the United Nations country team, and those in which the team could have a comparative advantage. The operational plan for the implementation of this process is being developed jointly by UNAMID and the country team and will be based on specific benchmarks, taking into account certain preconditions, including the mobilization of adequate financial resources and the necessary support from the Government of the Sudan.

With regard to UNAMID's achievements, I will limit my remarks to the protection of civilians, which has received sustained attention and effort by the mission over the last few months.

UNAMID has continued to effectively implement its protection-of-civilians mandate through the provision of physical protection, logistical and security support to humanitarian operations, the promotion of a protective environment, and local conflict mediation. In this context, the mission has revised its protection-of-civilians strategy, which is now being implemented by its relevant components.

The most significant achievements over the reporting period were related to the establishment of protective areas within or in the vicinity of team sites and instances in which peacekeepers repelled or prevented attacks against civilians, conducted robust patrols to affected villages and escorted humanitarian missions during intercommunal clashes. Protection committees were also formed with IDPs to coordinate relevant protection activities in collaboration with humanitarian personnel.

Let me turn now to the development of an exit strategy for UNAMID. In February 2015, a joint working group was established between the United Nations, the African Union and the Government of the Sudan to respond to the request of the Security Council in its resolution 2173 (2014) for the development of an exit strategy for UNAMID, as well as to address the particular concerns raised by the Government of the Sudan in this regard. As mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, following a field visit and two rounds of discussions, the Working Group has not yet produced a conclusion, and consultations will resume in the coming weeks. However, during the meetings, the African Union-United Nations team explored the idea of a two-pronged approach with the Government.

First, UNAMID's proposed exit strategy is based on the achievement of the mission's benchmarks, as endorsed by the Council last year and premised on a political solution to the conflict based on direct talks between the parties, starting with a cessation of hostilities.

The proposed exit strategy is also based on the gradual and phased withdrawal of UNAMID's force from Western Darfur, where there have not been any major activities by armed groups or intercommunal fighting in the past two years. The gradual reduction in UNAMID's presence in Western Darfur would be complemented by a progressive handover of its tasks to the Government and the United Nations country team, as the necessary conditions for a consolidation of security in the State are created by the national authorities. This approach would reflect the mission's efforts to concentrate on its three strategic priorities while further demonstrating flexibility and efficiency by reducing its size. As part of this, UNAMID would also close three other team sites in Northern and Southern Darfur that, in accordance with the findings of the recently concluded military capability study, are assessed to be in areas that do not necessitate the mission's presence.

(*spoke in French*)

Allow me in conclusion to make one last remark. Resolving the conflict in Darfur now more than ever requires joint efforts on the part of the Security Council, the African Union and the international community as a whole in order to make the belligerent parties understand that there cannot be a military solution. The suffering endured by the people of Darfur has lasted for far too long and must cease immediately.

Despite the encouraging progress made in the negotiations in 2014, the prospect for a lasting solution to the crisis seems to be but wishful thinking in the current context. The relaunching of direct negotiations and national dialogue must remain the priority.

While reiterating our thanks to the Sudanese authorities for their efforts to achieve better cooperation with UNAMID, I should like to stress the fact that the

United Nations and the African Union have no objective other than the well-being of the population, an end to the violence and an negotiated end to the crisis, in order to being a process of harmonious development in Darfur and, following that, the entire country of the Sudan. We know that the Government of the Republic of the Sudan also shares this goal. That is why the preparation of an exit strategy for UNAMID must be linked to the results obtained vis-à-vis that goal and a specific improvement in the situation on the ground.

When our efforts in this area have borne fruit and the population has been freed from fear and violence, that will be the time for us to disengage. In the meantime, we must continue our cooperation on the basis of mutual trust. That is why, in common accord with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, the Secretariat of the United Nations asks that the mandate of UNAMID be extended for an additional year, until June 2016.

The President: I thank Mr. Mulet for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Hassan (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Truth be told, I had prepared a positive, optimistic statement; that was the spirit that guided me when I was coming to visit the Council. However, before I read my statement, I have to say that I find myself forced to comment on the first part of Mr. Mulet's briefing, on the situation in Darfur during the reported period.

He said that the situation was very dangerous; that is an inaccurate description. The deterioration in the situation and the number of individuals displaced as a result of tribal violence was presented as a situation that had arisen as a result of the violence. But there was an armed group that crossed State borders into another State. Rather than calling the attention of the Security Council to this fact or referring to an attack on the very sovereignty of a State, Mr. Mulet told us only about the consequences of this incident, to which we had to respond.

That is why the violence took place. I recognize that there is tribal violence in Darfur. It has been happening for a long time as a result of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons around Darfur. It is a long story, with the first cases of tribal violence taking place, according to this report and Mr. Mulet's remarks, in 1952, while we were still under British colonial rule. That tribal violence led to the displacement of persons at the time, but the Government intervened and contained the situation.

However, we should not confuse tribal violence and its impact with what we are referring to here today. We should not depict it as an open conflict between rebel groups and the Sudanese Government. This situation is being contained, even if there remain a few pockets of instability in some areas. It is well known that there are active groups.

Mr. Mulet also referred to the Operation Decisive Summer, which he characterized as destabilizing security. This again is the wrong way of depicting the situation. In December 2013 and January and February 2014, activity undertaken by the remnants of rebel groups in Darfur, including seven offensives, meant that we were simply forced to respond to the situation through the Rapid Support Forces, as part of Operation Decisive Summer, which we launched solely as a response to the attacks of the armed groups. In other words, the situation is being wrongly depicted here. We acted to impose stability on Darfur. Operation Decisive Summer did not destabilize the region — quite the opposite.

And when Mr. Mulet refers to the obstacles that have hampered the work of the Mission — the Secretary-General states that during the reporting period 595 visas were approved while only 7 visas had been suspended — I wonder here, quite openly, what sort of obstacles the Assistant Secretary-General is referring to.

The African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID) is an African Union operation and one we hold dear. We certainly do not want to stem or hamper any of its actions. We wish to cooperate with it and that is all I wanted to clarify here and now, in order to ensure that the Council fully understands what is actually taking place, the reasons why we have deployed the Operation Decisive Summer. It is an operation that should be praised because it has contributed to stability in Darfur.

I return now to my statement, and of course I would like to start, Mr. President, by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council this month. We are confident that your presidency of the Council, Sir, will provide a different dimension to the way in which the issue of Darfur is tackled, given that you are fraternal country, linked to the Sudan through a long history of relations. We would like to thank the

Assistant Secretary-General for his briefing. It is the first part of the briefing that we disagree with, as I said previously.

We thank Mr. Abiodun Oluremi Bashua, Deputy Joint Special Representative for UNAMID. We are honoured by his presence during the Council's deliberations, all the more so since these deliberations coincide with consultations under way on the draft resolution on the extension of the UNAMID mandate.

I turn to the Council at a time when the Sudan finds itself on the eve of what stands to be a very promising phase, one replete with hope. President Al-Bashir won the elections in February. He garnered an unprecedented number of votes and was re-elected for another term of office, which is mentioned in paragraph 38 of the report of the Secretary-General. The report also referred to the elections that took place in Darfur, which unfolded in a peaceful manner without any security-related incidents.

I am sure that the Council followed the inaugural address of President Al-Bashir before the National Assembly in which he referred to an amnesty and called upon all groups bearing arms to engage in the path of reason and become involved in the comprehensive national peace dialogue. Moved by the spirit, the new Government of the Sudan expects more decisive action to resume the national dialogue without excluding anyone. We also hope that the Security Council — and the international community more broadly speaking — will assume their responsibilities with respect to those who have rejected the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and, in keeping with the address made by the President of the Republic, we intend to bolster our cooperation with the United Nations and with all of its bodies and agencies in order to complete the reconstruction and stabilization process in Darfur.

What should be avoided is wrongful depictions of the reality in the region, because that undermines the spirit of cooperation, specifically with the United Nations entities present in Darfur, with a view to finalizing the process of rebuilding and reconstructing the area, including resuming the mediation processes and fostering reconciliation between the tribes to put an end to the senseless tribal violence in Darfur and ensure that efforts are focused on development and on the rehabilitation of the area.

Turning now to UNAMID's exit strategy, we expect that the draft resolution that will extend the mandate of the operation will include a number of clear paragraphs on that issue. We would remind the Council that paragraph 7 of resolution 2173 (2014) is quite clear and direct in its request that the Secretary-General review the operations of the Mission and its achievements to implement the strategic priorities in cooperation with the African Union and all stakeholders, including, of course, the United Nations.

We are cooperating fully with the working group. This is not a new request. The Council adopted this strategy in resolution 2173 (2014), in which it renewed the mandate and included a number of proposals on exit strategies and ways to transfer responsibility from UNAMID to the Sudan country team, as a great deal of progress has been made in implementing the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. The pockets of remaining armed groups that are attempting from time to time to carry out military activities, to hamper and impede the remaining provisions of the Doha Document and to put an end the exit strategy leads us to ask the following question: Why are those groups continuing to carry out such actions? Furthermore, other components of those armed groups are preventing the overall return of displaced persons in the five federal states of Darfur. What the armed groups want is to have the refugees remain in the camps so that they have a pretext to continue to bear arms.

As we said in previous statements, in no way have we referred to an immediate exit strategy for UNAMID. We have not done so. Rather, we said that we are currently implementing a gradual strategy in cooperation with the African Union and the United Nations that involves immediately reducing the military component of UNAMID and other components in areas where security has been restored and which are stable. I am referring now to East Darfur and three areas in Central Darfur.

Those drawdown operations are continuing gradually in other regions, based on benchmarks that we have all agreed to. That is why I would like to state in this Chamber that our institutions stand ready to undertake the operations necessary to restore security, and we call on the United Nations to strengthen the capacity of its country team to ensure that it is in a position to take on the operations that have been transferred from UNAMID, in accordance with resolution 2173 (2014).

In assessing the security situation in Darfur, we should distinguish between the tribal conflicts that have always occurred in the region and other conflicts.

There are no more open armed conflicts between the rebel groups and the Government, with the exception of a few pockets of resistance carrying out very limited sabotage operations. It is incorrect to speak of open conflict with such groups except, as I just mentioned, with the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), which crossed our borders on 26 April with the aim of carrying out that kind of destructive activity. Our Rapid Support Forces responded at the time, but apart from that there have been no open conflicts with the other armed groups. As for tribal violence, however, that has always existed in Darfur, as I have said, and we have all seen the efforts the Government of the Sudan has made to contain that violence and deal with its underlying causes. The Government has been able to use local tribal chiefs to achieve a number of reconciliations between tribes, and those efforts continue.

The issue of displaced persons should be addressed within the framework of development efforts, and to that end the Government of the Sudan needs support through the lifting of unfair unilateral sanctions, and calls on donors to continue their assistance efforts by implementing the Doha Document. The tribal conflicts result simply from social causes and development issues, and the best way to deal with them would be to lift the sanctions and forgive our debt, which would help us to resolve the conflicts, which arise over issues such as water rights and pasturage, which are prevalent throughout Africa, including the Sahel region.

That is why we reject paragraphs 18 and 19 of the report, concerning the incidents in the Kass region. The report distorts the truth, and we have already spoken of the incident, which was a twofold rather than a single one. The first was on 23 April, when five members of a raiding group seized a UNAMID vehicle near the Kass water point; the second involved an operation pursuing the group that had seized the vehicle, in which various groups fired on the inhabitants of Zaghawa, even though they had raised white flags, killing two innocent civilians and injuring several more. The vehicle was recovered by the Sudanese armed groups following a clash with those who had seized it, and it was restored to UNAMID.

We also have reservations about paragraph 28 of the report, which contains incorrect information regarding the evacuation of an Ethiopian peacekeeper who was injured in the Mukhjar area. We once again offer our condolences to our brother Government of Ethiopia and to the family of the deceased. We treated him as if he was one of our own Sudanese soldiers. It appears that when he fell from an observation tower, his head hit a metal container. His injuries were very bad, but he was evacuated by airlift thanks to military intelligence and approval. Unfortunately, this occurred at the same time as the operation in which the Rapid Support Forces clashed with JEM as it crossed our borders in the Nakhara area, which is not far from the Mukhjar region.

Again, we offer our condolences and reiterate our readiness to cooperate with the United Nations and its entities in Darfur, including UNAMID. We want to facilitate the work of that very African operation. The Sudan is an African country and an integral part of Africa, and no one here in the Council can say that we are trying to hinder UNAMID's operations or put obstacles in its way. On the contrary, we greatly value the security and safety of the Mission and all its members, and, needless to say, we support the facilitation of its efforts. That is why last week, when the Rapid Support Forces recovered five seized vehicles and returned them to UNAMID, we clearly demonstrated our willingness to cooperate.

At the same time, we should be implementing the gradual and flexible exit strategy that was agreed to by all sides. We would like to send the message to those who have found themselves in the camps that they should begin to prepare to return to their homes, take up their former daily activities and lead normal lives again. The mere launching of the exit strategy will send a message to the rebel leaders who have rejected the Doha Document to set aside their doubts and hesitation, listen to the voice of reason and become involved again in the process of peace and reconstruction, especially in the light of the amnesty declaration and the assurances given by the President of our Republic in his most recent address to Parliament. We expect a technical decision on the renewal of the Mission's mandate, particularly the paragraphs concerning the exit strategy from the regions that we have agreed on within the framework of the working group. Those include the states of Eastern Darfur, as well as three regions of Um Kadada, Tulus and Malha in Central Darfur.

I would again like to touch on the paragraphs in the report that state that the Government of the Sudan has used banned weapons in some areas. That information has not been confirmed and should therefore not be presented to the Council as such. It is not true. It cannot refer to the Rapid Support Forces, which are

flexible, lightly armed troops who do not need heavy weaponry, as everyone knows, which is why we reject those allegations. I reiterate that we are at a stage where we can be far more open than we may have been in the past, especially in the light of the amnesty assurances our President has announced for the leaders of the groups that are still armed. We are on the verge of a phase in which we will need the Council's assistance and collaboration. We will spare no effort to cooperate with the United Nations and its entities, and we ask the Council to send the right message to those armed groups that are still reluctant to become involved in the political process, in order to encourage them to join in the peace process.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7461

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7461st meeting

Thursday, 11 June 2015, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Ibrahim	(Malaysia)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Klein
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Central African region

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (S/2015/339)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Central African region

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (S/2015/339)

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/339, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa.

I now give the floor to Mr. Bathily.

Mr. Bathily (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to introduce the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/339) on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). The report provides an update on the threats to peace and security in Central Africa. It also includes a review of the activities carried out by UNOCA over the past six months in cooperation with Member States and subregional organizations.

Since the publication of the Secretary-General's previous report in November 2014 (S/2014/812), the political and security situation in the subregion has remained a source of concern. Central Africa is again marked by growing pre-electoral tensions; the economic crisis worsened by the falling price of crude in the oil-producing countries of the region; rising youth unemployment; terrorist activities, particularly those committed by Boko Haram and the Lord's Resistance Army; and the cross-border impact of crises in a number of countries in the region, such as the Central African Republic and Burundi.

(*spoke in English*)

With regard to the ongoing crisis in the Central African region, the Central African Republic continues to have regional and multidimensional consequences, with nearly half a million refugees, ongoing gross violations of human rights, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, growing gang-related criminality and environmental degradation in refugee areas. At the request of the Head of State of the transition and with the agreement of the international mediator, President Sassou Nguesso of Congo, in early May I chaired the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation and worked in close consultation with the international mediators and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, Mr. Babacar Gaye. That included working to defuse pre-Forum tensions, discouraging spoilers, advising participants, including representatives of the armed groups, ensuring inclusivity and transparency, facilitating ownership of the process by Central Africans and keeping all actors mindful of a long-term vision for peace in that country.

The Forum concluded on 11 May with the signing of a number of key documents, including the republican pact for peace, national reconciliation and reconstruction in the Central African Republic and an agreement on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). I wish to acknowledge the transitional authorities, and particularly the citizens of the Central African Republic, for that success. Moving forward, it will be critical to capitalize on the momentum generated by the Forum and to mobilize the required resources for the elections and DDR.

Boko Haram remained a serious threat to the Lake Chad Basin region. The dire humanitarian situation in the region, resulting from attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram, continued to affect the population, including hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians in Cameroon and Chad. Insecurity and insufficient resources continued to strain the already stretched response capacities of Governments and United Nations entities in the affected countries.

The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) demonstrated its commitment to address the Boko Haram threat during several summits of Heads of State and Government in which I represented the Secretary-General. The deployment

of Chadian troops to the border areas of Cameroon and Nigeria and the recent inauguration of the headquarters of the Multinational Joint Task Force on Boko Haram (MNJTF) signalled increasing cooperation between States in the fight against Boko Haram. Military operations have put Boko Haram on the defensive, but recent attacks by the terrorist group highlight the need for the affected States to remain vigilant and engaged. While the fight against Boko Haram is not over, we must start looking ahead to the stabilization phase in order to secure military gains. That will involve international support and regional commitment for candidly examining and addressing the root causes of violent extremism.

UNOCA remained both politically and technically engaged in supporting the countries of the region address the impact of Boko Haram's activities, in close collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA). My Office, supported efforts to develop a coordinated humanitarian response and to advance the operationalization of the Multinational Joint Task Force. I undertook a diplomatic tour of UNOWA with Special Representative of the Secretary-General Chambas to engage the leaders of Boko Haram-affected countries. We will continue to support the region's collective response to the Boko Haram threat.

The Lord's Resistance Army continued to pose a threat to regional security, particularly to populations in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During the period under review, in spite of ongoing efforts, the number of abductions unfortunately increased. More than 200,000 persons still remain displaced across the region. The group is also involved in the illicit trade in natural resources to finance its activities.

The surrender of senior LRA commander Dominic Ongwen in January 2015, and his subsequent transfer to the International Criminal Court, marks a significant step forward with regard to criminal justice. Ongwen's removal from the battlefield sends a strong message to remaining LRA fighters and signifies that international efforts to combat the group within the framework of the regional strategies of the United Nations and the African Union are bearing fruit.

UNOCA remained actively engaged on the LRA issue to ensure the implementation of the United Nations Regional Strategy to Address the Threat and Impact of the Activities of the LRA and to ensure international coordination through the convening of the biannual coordination meeting of LRA focal points. UNOCA also worked in close collaboration with the African Union to ensure the political commitment of LRA-affected countries to this cause. The African Union Special Envoy for the Lord's Resistance Army Issue, General Jackson Tuwei, and I met with the Ugandan authorities in Kampala to emphasize the importance of the Government's sustained political and operational commitment to the African Union Regional Task Force. I would like to express my gratitude for the work undertaken in that process by the African Union Regional Task Force, whose mandate was recently renewed, on 18 May, by the African Union Peace and Security Council.

Maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea continued to pose serious security threats and to have economic consequences for Central Africa and West African States. In coordination with UNOWA, UNOCA continued working with the States concerned to consolidate their efforts in combating maritime insecurity.

Central Africa remained plagued by cross-border criminal activities, including the illicit trade in wildlife to support the activities of armed groups such as the LRA. Further to the recent signing of a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and ECCAS, UNOCA will support Central Africa in the development of a subregional strategy to tackle the growing phenomenon of poaching.

Central Africa has entered an electoral cycle that will conclude in 2018. Political tensions in the run-up to elections are on the rise in some countries. Issues related to amending constitutional term limits are dividing electorates. Violent confrontations have led to the loss of lives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Burundi. There are simmering social grievances, which are exacerbated by the economic contraction in the subregion's many oil-producing States.

In that context, I continued to use the good offices of the Secretary-General to engage political stakeholders across the subregion and encourage the peaceful resolution of disputes. As a result of the support provided by UNOCA and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, journalists from Central Africa adopted a code of conduct that articulates their responsibilities in support of peaceful electoral processes. UNOCA also organized the third

meeting of United Nations presences in Central Africa, held on 18 May, which focused on increasing internal coherence and efficacy in preventing and managing electoral violence in the subregion. A meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa took place in Luanda on 4 June, with the assistance of UNOCA. The meeting adopted ministerial declarations on Burundi and the Central African Republic to reaffirm the region's support.

Despite the many challenges they face, Central African leaders have undertaken important initiatives in the interests of their populations. On 6 May, the Heads of State of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) decided to implement the free movement of peoples in the six countries of the CEMAC zone, signalling a major step towards greater regional integration. Meanwhile, ECCAS Heads of State continued to work collectively in the Central African Republic as well as in response to the instability caused by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin region. ECCAS Heads of State also decided to appoint a special envoy for Burundi and the Great Lakes region to appeal to the Burundian parties to seek to resolve their differences through peaceful means. UNOCA will continue to support these and other subregional initiatives that advance long-term stability.

The report before the Council also presents the findings and recommendations of the recent strategic review of UNOCA's mandate and activities. Since its establishment five years ago, UNOCA has demonstrated its added value in a fragile subregion with enormous internal and cross-border security challenges. The Secretary-General encourages Member States to support the recommendations of the strategic review. With the continued support of this body, UNOCA shall continue to be a steadfast partner to the Central African States in the promotion of peace and stability.

The President: I thank Mr. Bathily for his briefing.

The Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank Council members for their valuable contributions to this statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2015/12.

It is so decided.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7462

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 June 2015

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 7462nd (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 16 June 2015, at 3 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 16 June 2015, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 7462nd meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force.

"The President invited Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in the meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing by Mr. Ladsous.

"Members of the Council, Mr. Ladsous and representatives of participating contributing countries had an exchange of views."

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